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BOOKS TO GIVE THIS CHRISTMAS

THE KING'S MARRIAGE

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . Page 877
KING AND COUNTRY 880
A LONDON DIARY 881
THIS ENGLAND 882
MILK AND THE PUBLIC 882
SOME IMPRESSIONS OF A "SPECIAL AREA." By Harry Roberts 884
FIRE! By Y. Y. 885
THE MADRID DEFENDERS. By Richard Church . 886
CORRESPONDENCE 886
From W. Ruddock; E. M. Backett; J. M. Jerwood; Lionel Birch; R. H. S. Crossman; L. F. Easterbrook; W. G. Fraser; Sir Michael E. Sadler; Jonathan Griffin; D. R. Davies; E. K. M.; Eric T. B. Hicks; G. Hall; Marguerite M. Jacob; W. P. Robson; John Walker.
ETIQUETTE FOR NEW MEMBERS 890
THE KILN. By Clive Bell 891
DECEMBER NIGHT. By V. Sackville West . . 892
HELP FOR BRITISH FILMS. By Walter Ashley . 893
PLAYS AND PICTURES 894
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By David Garnett . . . 896
REVIEWS: Page
Salavin. By Brian Howard 937
Short Stories. By Elizabeth Bowen . . . 938
Finale. By Harold J. Laski 940
Mr. Yeats Fumbles. By G. W. Stonier . . 940
Mr. Oxford and Mr. Liverpool. By Roger Fulford 942
Fun Without Games. By Frederick Laws . . 944
Lockhart—Vol. III. By Raymond Mortimer . 946
An Enemy of France. By Edward Sackville West 948
Sir Philip Sidney. By A. Desmond Hawkins . 950
SHORTER NOTICES 950
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 952
CROSSWORD 956
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Toreador . . . 958
CHRISTMAS BOOKS SUPPLEMENT (*see separate index*)
Including articles by Jack B. Yeats; Rosamond Lehmann; H. E. Bates; Arthur Marshall; Barrington Gates; K. John; George Scott Moncrieff; Harry Roberts; Roger Marvell; C. E. M. Joad; Keidrych Rhys; Desmond Shawe-Taylor; Robert Waller; Harold J. Laski; J. A. Hobson; Geoffrey Parsons; W. M. Macmillan; Freda Utley; V. S. Pritchett; Donald Carswell.

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE fact that there was a serious dispute between the King and his Cabinet had been well concealed from the public until Thursday morning. Even then it was not made very clear in most papers that the Cabinet threatened to resign if the King chose to abide by his declared intention to marry Mrs. Ernest Simpson. The *Times* refers to this as a marriage "incompatible with the Throne" and demands from His Majesty "some authoritative act or statement" which would enable the press to put an end once for all to gossip and rumour. The *Morning Post* "shrinks from believing that current gossip has solid foundation" and hopes for its refutation. The *Daily Telegraph*, accepting substantially the truth of rumour, urges the King to do nothing which would "fatally compromise" the dignity of the Crown. The *Daily Mail*, which describes abdication as a calamitous step, hopes vaguely for a "solution." In a constructive and sensibly frank article the *News Chronicle* suggests that the way out should be found in permitting the King to make Mrs. Simpson his Consort, with an Act of Exclusion to secure existing succession to the Throne. The *Daily Herald* and *Daily Express* carried no editorial comment, but informed their readers that there was a grave constitutional crisis over the King's private affairs.

The War in Spain

The rushing through of the Bill to prevent the transport of arms to Spain in British ships synchronised, ironically enough, with the news of the 5,000 or more Germans landing in Cadiz. This intervention on behalf of the rebels is regarded in Downing Street, we are told, with "deep concern"—and well it may be! It has been officially or semi-officially denied in Berlin that the Government of the Reich have any responsibility for it. But that is a childish pretence. How could such a force of "totalitarian volunteers," or anything like it, leave Germany and travel to Spain, without the knowledge or connivance of the German Government? Of course this is not the first (nor is there any reason to suppose it will be the last) violation of the so-called neutrality to which the European Powers have pledged themselves. There is no secret about the aeroplanes and other munitions of war with which the insurgents have been supplied by the Fascist States, or the help (on a lesser scale) which the Spanish Government have received from Russia, or the grip which Italy has established in Majorca, or the International Brigade that has been the backbone of the defence of Madrid (though this miscellaneous force is on a different footing, since it consists of genuine volunteers, for whom none of their Governments can be held responsible). It is patent, as Wing-Commander James, just back from Madrid, said in the House on Tuesday, that "to-day the clash in Spain has ceased to be a Spanish civil war; it is already an international civil war on Spanish soil."

British Neutrality

In this perilous and rapidly worsening situation the British Government still pursue their old policy of unenlightened self-interest. Optimistic and timorous by turns, they have taken their precautions too late, they have chosen the wrong course, or have done the right thing in the wrong way. The arguments for the Bill advanced by Mr. Runciman and Mr. Eden on Tuesday were pulled to pieces by Mr. Noel Baker and other Opposition speakers, and even by members on their own benches, like the Duchess of Atholl. An amendment was carried which extends the embargo to the landing of arms in Portugal as well as in Spain. That removes a glaring inequity from the measure. But it does not affect the criticism of the non-intervention policy as a whole. That policy, as the Duchess said and as many of us have been saying from the outset "has told against the constitutionally elected Government of Spain." And she went on to stress the point that if, as likely enough, it results in an insurgent victory, it will tell also against the interests of this country. Do British Ministers really believe that the entrenchment of the Fascist Powers in Spain and in the Mediterranean will make no difference to our position and to the causes of democracy and peace, for which we are supposed to stand? Or do they really think that the policy of 100 per cent. neutrality—pursued by Great Britain alone or almost alone—will enable us to use our influence to stop the war or persuade the Fascist leopards to change their spots?

Other Peoples' Neutrality

Mr. Eden avows that the Government feel dissatisfied with the working of non-intervention. They could hardly feel anything else—except perhaps disgusted and humiliated. They now propose to make it more effective by prohibiting volunteers going to Spain. That, in the pass we have reached, looks about as hopeful as the meeting of the League of Nations Council which the Spanish Government has demanded. Great Britain might, without any great difficulty, enforce this prohibition, and so might France. Russia, we believe, would do likewise, if she was assured that the Fascist Powers came honestly into line. But who can feel any assurance about that? Will Germany and Italy, after their openly proclaimed intention not to allow a "Red" victory in Spain, now leave General Franco to take his chance? His difficulty is a shortage, not of arms and ammunition, but of men. That has been shown quite clearly in the recent fighting, and particularly by his failure at Madrid. His supply of Moors, as well as of rebel Spaniards, is running thin and it is urgent that he should be reinforced from abroad. In all the circumstances, this proposed "strengthening" of non-intervention seems calculated only to make it more one-sided than ever. And the *Times* is not understating it when it says that hopes of mediation and an armistice in Spain are "frail."

Britain's Vital Interests

The establishment of a Food Plans (Defence) Department, under the aegis of Sir Thomas Inskip, is one more indication that the British Government still holds that preparation for war is the best, if not the only, constructive effort it can make for peace. But it is still not clear what issues would be regarded by our rulers as *casus belli* calling automatically for British armed intervention. Mr. Eden has just re-affirmed in unequivocal terms that the independence of Belgium is a vital interest for us, and that, in the event of Belgium being attacked, she can count on British aid. There is, indeed, little room for doubt that any aggressive move by Germany across the frontiers of Belgium, Holland or France would lead to immediate British armed intervention. It is a cardinal point of the Government's policy that France and the Low Countries form a strategic unit with the British Isles. But, otherwise, our intentions are no clearer than they were in 1914. Does Downing Street consider the independence of Czechoslovakia, or the integrity of Spanish Morocco, the Balearics or the Canaries, "vital" British interests? At what stage should we consider our sea communications with India so menaced that we must fight to restore them? Nobody knows. All that is apparent is that the Government has irrevocably abandoned the League conception of "indivisible peace," distinguishes between degrees and directions of aggression, and is supinely failing to exercise its diplomatic strength in time to prevent threats to peace developing from the remote to the "vital."

Pan-America

That President Roosevelt should have given the time to visit Buenos Aires was in itself an important political fact, apart from the speech with which he opened the Pan-American Conference. As his earlier visit to Canada showed, he is working to cultivate a sense of continental unity. That he may succeed is probable for several reasons. First and foremost his policy of the "good neighbour" has won sympathies, which his namesake and even President Wilson antagonised by brandishing the "big stick" over Mexico and the Caribbean shores. Mr. Roosevelt has not been satisfied with smooth words. Haiti has been evacuated after an occupation of twenty years; the right of armed intervention in Cuba has been abandoned, and the Filipinos are assured of their independence. Secondly, all Latin Americans, after the League's failure in the Chaco war, may well doubt its vitality, and look for a more lively substitute, though they may not, and need not, quit it. Again, there is at

Washington and elsewhere a growing anxiety over the plans of colonisation attributed to the Nazis, especially in Brazil. Finally, most of the South American Republics are now under Conservative or Fascist governments (that of Brazil being a peculiarly brutal specimen), and these are rather disposed to lean on American Imperialism than to resist it. They may note with satisfaction what Mr. Roosevelt's candid friends at home resent, that financial pressure was used to upset a Government of the Left in Cuba in favour of one drawn from the propertied class.

Mr. Roosevelt's Speech

Mr. Roosevelt's was what Americans call a "keynote" speech. It expressed a point of view in general terms, but it carefully avoided any definite suggestions as to what the Conference should do. This was wise, for Latin American Republics have their *amour propre*, nor do their statesmen enjoy eclipse. Perhaps the most significant passages of the speech were those which repeatedly emphasised the value of democracy, both as a bulwark of peace and as the foundation of a happy and progressive society. These passages were aimed partly at the European Dictators, but clearly also at their American imitators. Notable, too, the polemic against economic self-sufficiency as a cause of war. For the rest, the speech was an eloquent plea for peace; if it made no proposals for disarmament it denounced the folly of rearmament, an activity in which the United States is doing its share with the rest. It should not be inferred from the vagueness of this speech that the United States has no concrete policy for this Conference, but rather that the President was too wise to obtrude it at the start. It is probable that the Pan-American machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes will be tightened up, possibly the Monroe doctrine will be restated as a collective policy of all the American States. Probably there will be a move to accept the United States' neutrality legislation as a model for general adoption. That means little if it applies only to the export to belligerents of munitions, which Latin America does not manufacture; but some talk of including raw materials. Argentina, by moving obtrusively into the orbit of Washington, may be protesting indirectly against the consequences of Ottawa.

London Housing

The London County Council is now making a serious beginning upon the demolition and re-development of slum areas in East London. Apart from the East End, slum clearance in London does not present a problem that cannot be handled with reasonable prospects of success on the ordinary lines. But in certain parts of the East End, notably Bethnal Green, there is need for the large-scale re-planning of extensive slum areas, many of whose present inhabitants will have to be re-housed on other sites. With the area recently appropriated in Hackney Marsh, the L.C.C. is now setting out upon an extensive scheme of re-planning in Bethnal Green. The scheme now advanced covers 46 acres, in addition to about 14 acres already in hand. This compares with a total of 22½ acres dealt with between 1918 and 1934, and about 14 acres taken in hand since Labour obtained its majority. Side by side with these special measures for slum clearance, the L.C.C. will proceed with its general housing programme, and with other special schemes arising out of the recent overcrowding census, which showed 80,000 Londoners to be living under overcrowded conditions. From the report of the L.C.C. Housing Committee, it is interesting to observe that, whereas nearly £50 millions have already been spent on housing by the Council, the net charge on the rates is under 2d. in the pound.

Lord Nuffield Redoubles

Lord Nuffield, having given £2,000,000 to Oxford University, and another million or so to other beneficiaries, has rounded off his munificence by presenting a million ordinary shares in his company (at present valued at well over £2 millions) to his employees. Instead of starting an ordinary profit sharing scheme, he has created a trust fund, to be managed by representatives of his associated concerns and of the employees. This trust will hold the ordinary shares, and dispense the sums accruing in dividends in the form of paid holiday allowances and other grants to employees, varying with length of service, according to plans which have still to be drawn up. The value of the grant thus depends on the profits made by Morris Motors and its associated companies; and the scheme is thus one of profit sharing after fixed charges have been met. But Lord Nuffield has avoided the difficulties involved in either creating a special class of shares, tenable by employees only, or putting transferable shares in the possession of individual employees who may subsequently leave the firm. Much will evidently depend on how the fund is managed—whether any attempt is made, for example, to penalise strikers by withholding their benefits, or to grant preferential treatment for continuous long service. On these points no comment is possible till the detailed scheme is in draft. Meanwhile, we may fairly congratulate Lord Nuffield on his success in perceiving that money is good to use, and not merely to accumulate.

Critics Confounded

Herr Hitler has gone one better than Louis XIV. In announcing a new veto on all subjective criticism of works of art, literature, music and drama, Dr. Goebbels declares: "It cannot be tolerated that, while in everything else the Führer's great constructive work is warmly supported by public opinion, artists should be the last victims of free criticism." In fact, "L'art c'est moi," and must be protected from the treasonable activities of commentators who, "in spite of all efforts, still bear characteristics of the liberalistic-Jewish period." For the future, in the totalitarian State, the place of criticism will be taken by objective description designed to stimulate the public to form its own conclusions. The writers will be licensed, the licences being issuable only to persons over the age of thirty who can furnish proofs of satisfactory training in the branch of art whose productions they propose to "describe." The German public, thus freed from the leading-strings of professional criticism, may feel that its innate intelligence is flattered. But will it be allowed to read descriptions, no matter how impeccably objective, of works produced by the many artists whom the Nazi State has exiled? And what will be the test of objectivity?

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KING AND COUNTRY

The unsophisticated reader, who finds the most intriguing subject of gossip, which had been until this week completely banned by the press, suddenly turned into a constitutional crisis occupying far more space than the German invasion of Spain, may very well wonder at the reasons for this dramatic change. From the *Times* he might imagine that it was due to the publicity about the King's affairs in the American press; but this has been going on for weeks, indeed for months. From most papers he will suppose that it is the result of Bishop Blunt's censorious remarks, addressed to the King. This, however, was the occasion, not the cause, of the decision to give publicity in the press to a question which has already been discussed round every dinner-table in every club and at every street corner. The press has been silent, partly because of a very astutely managed official pressure and partly for a wholly reputable reason. The King's private life is his own affair; it is only where the question of marriage arises that it becomes legitimately and indeed inevitably a subject of public discussion. It becomes so now because the King has clearly expressed his determination to marry, and the marriage that he proposes is one of which the Cabinet disapproves. We have not ourselves felt justified in discussing this issue as long as there seemed a hope of its being privately and amicably settled. It has now reached dimensions of a crisis which may result in the Cabinet's resignation or the King's abdication.

The facts behind the crisis are simple enough. The King wishes to marry Mrs. Ernest Simpson, one of his close circle of friends, and a woman of American birth. If he does so, according to the law as it now stands, she will become Queen of England and her children heirs to the throne of England. The majority of the Cabinet and the ecclesiastical authorities object to this marriage, not only because Mrs. Simpson is a commoner, of foreign birth, but because she has been married twice before. Moreover, they feel that, however unjustified the scandal that has been spread by the American press, for the subject of that scandal to become Queen of England would have an unfortunate effect on English monarchy. Whether or not any one of these objections is valid in itself, it must be admitted that in view of the sentiments expressed from religious bodies and in particular from Canada and other Dominions, the Cabinet have grounds for raising serious objections, fearing the effect of this marriage on the position of the monarchy. The immediate constitutional point that arises is whether in this matter, as in others, the King is bound to submit his will to that of his Ministers.

This constitutional issue is easily stated. The popularity and indeed the existence of the British monarchy depends on the knowledge that the monarch will in all matters of public policy accept the advice of his constitutionally chosen Ministers. The King has the right privately to explain his own views to them and give them advice and to be kept fully informed of their views and intentions; he has not the right in any matter of public policy to over-ride them or to make public any differences of opinion between them and himself. It is only on this understanding that any democrat can be a monarchist. But clearly the question of the King's marriage is not wholly covered by this generalisation. The King's marriage cannot be entirely his private affair, but neither can it be compared to an ordinary matter of public business where the King must have in the last resort no will of his own. According to the law of England and according to the laws of morality, common sense and common honesty, the King's marriage must be his own decision. We have outgrown the age of dynastic marriages, when royal persons were expected to sacrifice their personal affections to the supposed interests of national prestige, and according to the Royal Marriage Act of 1772 the only restriction on the King's choice is the provision that forbids him to marry a Roman Catholic.

We have then a constitutional dilemma for which there are no precedents—a situation in which the Cabinet's rights under our monarchical system clash directly with the King's moral rights as a man. As matters stand, if no compromise solution can be found, the prospects are that, rather than assent to the proposed marriage, the Cabinet would prefer to resign. Since it is unlikely in these circumstances that any alternative Government could be formed, the King, if the issue were forced to a final conclusion, would be bound either to give way or to abdicate. His abdication, freely talked of in some official quarters, would be in every respect lamentable.

Is there any way in which this legitimate wish on the King's part may be reconciled with the Cabinet's apparently unalterable objection to Mrs. Simpson becoming Queen of England? The King stands on his right as an individual to marry as he wishes. It is a right which should not be denied to any man. The Cabinet stands on the solid ground that according to the existing law the King's wife is Queen of England and mother of the successor to the throne and that they regard his choice as completely unsuitable. This should not be an inescapable dilemma. We should have thought it possible, indeed, not difficult, so to alter the law that the King's wife should not be Queen of England. A new Act of Succession could be passed, which would exclude any issue of this marriage from the throne. Mrs. Simpson would then no doubt receive titled rank and become the wife of the King without becoming Queen of England.

Such a solution would surely go far to satisfy the reasonable views of King and Cabinet alike. It would also have the incidental advantage of being in accordance with morality, decency and common sense. It has not been sufficiently emphasised in the press that the present crisis is a tribute to the honesty and straightforwardness of the King's character. If he had been willing to conform to old and dishonourable precedents and had gone through the form of marriage with some royal personage whom he did not love, this farcical ceremony would have been accepted by the Cabinet and solemnised by the Church. But the greatest asset of Edward VIII is his dislike of shams. Everyone knows that his speeches, both as Prince of Wales and as King, have commonly expressed his personal feelings; everyone knows when he visits a distressed area that he does so, not because it is a correct thing to do and not because his Ministers desire it, but because he is genuinely and deeply troubled about the misery and poverty which successive Governments have failed to relieve. The King, frankly, is not a conventional person and has a dislike for all forms of humbug. We believe that the country would welcome an honest solution of the kind we have suggested. It would end scandal and it would avoid the prospect which everyone deeply deplores that the present crisis may end in the King's abdication.

A LONDON DIARY

If you are talking to an Albert Hall crowd of seven or eight thousand, reasoning must be sacrificed to rhetoric. Therefore the most effective speaker at the Peace Pledge meeting last Friday was the Rev. Donald Soper, who has something of the flaming oratory of the great revivalist preachers. Lord Ponsonby spoke with his usual admirable common sense, and Mr. Lansbury with his customary sincerity and eloquence. Mr. Siegfried Sassoon read some of his indignant and moving war poems. Some of the other speakers were not up to the occasion. At the end a poem by John Addington Symonds, packed with the most admirable sentiments, was sung to a tune both uninspiring and unfamiliar. Emotionally, this meeting was, I felt, altogether mismanaged. Really the children of light must learn a little from the powers of darkness. The pacifist gospel requires to be propagated with psychological skill such as the Nazis have shown in Germany. Mr. Aldous Huxley, who has a most beautiful voice, invited us in sober but noble phrases not to be taken in by mere words; not to talk, like the Archbishop, of "the sword" when we mean poison gas and thermite, and not, above all, to let labels conceal from us the men to whom they are attached. We hate Fascists or Communists, he said in effect, because we forget that beneath these names they are human beings. His speech was directed simultaneously at the head and the heart, and I found it more moving than all the perorations under Heaven.

* * *

Two days later the Albert Hall was full for the Spanish Medical Aid. Here one certainly felt the force of Huxley's warning—and also the difficulty of heeding it. The audience was astonishingly young, and those young men and women showed throughout that they completely identified the cause of the Spanish people with their own cause, that they felt that this was their war just as clearly and as passionately as many people once felt that the German invasion of Belgium was England's cause. And, just as people poured out support for violated Belgium in 1914, so this audience were prepared to do anything they could to help Spain. The one practical thing they could do was to contribute towards the cost of looking after the wounded. Out of £2,000 collected, £1,500 was passed up during the meeting—an immense sum in view of the comparative poverty of most of the audience. There were items of jewellery too, and £1 from a "London policeman." Dr. Addison, as chairman of the Spanish Medical Aid, presided. He was quiet and non-political. Sir Stafford Cripps was religious. I use the word in its precise sense. For that is the key to Sir Stafford's sincerity and to his "indiscretions." He spoke much of self-sacrifice and behind his words was a clear conviction that Fascism is the Devil. Lord Churchill, who first took the Medical Unit to Spain, gave a direct and human account of its experiences. He, too, was unpolitical. He told a story of a wounded Moor whom the Unit had looked after. This Moor boasted of the fine pay Franco gave his troops, of the farm he would buy after the war, and displayed as evidence of Franco's generosity—what do you think? A German 1,000 mark note of the inflation period. When he heard that it was worthless his rage knew no bounds and I've been told that the Spanish Government was wise enough to release this Moor so that he could let his comrades in Franco's army know the truth. "I liked Churchill best," said a friend of mine who knows Spain well to me after the meeting; "he spoke of Moors as human beings. Much of the meeting frightened me by its warlike feeling. When slogans get going people forget. The Left in Spain has always extolled the Moors in the past as a race cruelly persecuted by the Catholics. Now the Moors are just part of the Fascist devil." This, as Huxley said, always happens in war. It raises the old intolerable dilemma of having to organise against evil—and Franco's attack is evil if anything ever was—and finding that you cannot do it without yourself engendering hatred. The star turn of the meeting was Harry Pollitt, who got a terrific reception and whose presence was completely ignored in the reports in the *Times* and, most significant, in the *Daily Herald*. The meeting was supposed to end with "God Save the People"—a fine hymn with a good tune, which very few people knew. The meeting actually ended with the "Internationale," sung with overwhelming fervour. Why does the Labour Party, by cold-shouldering movements which really appeal to the enthusiasm of the workers, force the rank and file to look to Communists for leadership?

* * *

The Crystal Palace was just on the point of regaining the admiration of the public. A friend of mine seemed rather surprised when I suggested that it was architecturally the best building erected in London in the last hundred years. When I asked what other buildings could claim this distinction, he was stumped. The most celebrated Continental architects have for some time accepted the Crystal Palace as the first "modern" building—that is to say, the first building which recognises properly the demands and possibilities of steel as an architectural material. The problem of enclosing a vast space has never been more economically and logically solved. This great structure was incomparably nearer to the masterpieces of classical and medieval art than the caricatures of Greek temples and Flemish Cloth Halls so popular with the Victorians, nearer also, for that matter, than the "Insurance Office" Renaissance style still so popular with our knighted architects. At the same time it had a definitely Victorian flavour—something faintly suggestive of the billowing crinoline (Mr. Gerald Heard's first book was a most ingenious examination of the analogy all through history between architecture and costume.) I have looked up the *Athenaeum* for 1854, which contains an article on the opening of the "Sydenham Palace" written in a style of almost *Religio Medici* magnificence: "Osiris is forgotten, and the spiced rags that swathed Amenophis lie fluttering in the night wind at the mouth of a Theban tomb." Let me quote one passage from this admirable writer—his name was Thornbury—about the architecture of the palace:

> This Sydenham palace is what it pretends to be. It asserts loudly that it is glass and iron—and *it is* glass and iron, and everyone can see through it. . . . It reports the state of nature and the weather. It shows the dull sky when the sky is dull, just as it shows the blood red flushings of its summer sunsets, when every pane turns ruby as if a vintage had been held upon the roof and the flowing grape-floods had dyed it. Thus, also, it has a poetry of its own—the poetry of fact and of nature, rather than of fantasy.
>
> It is the poetical product of a materialistic age—it is a realised idealism worked out in a century of reality—it is fiction grown into fact, with a tinge of its old fabulous poetry about it.

Here is one more sentence from this article which has to-day an ironical pathos:

> There is in this structure, fragile as it may seem—mere petrified air and crystallised ice as it is—self-supporting and unbuttressed as it appears—a durability that may deride the Pyramid.

* * *

A good story reaches me from Vienna, to which Dr. Schuschnigg has recently returned from a visit to the Tyrol. He went to the Tyrol to persuade local Burgomasters to try to secure more support for the Clerical dictatorship among the peasants. After his visit the village elders of one Tyrolese community went to the Burgomaster and said: "We enjoyed the fine language of the Chancellor in his speech, but tell us, what is the meaning of his constant references to 'Austria's Progress' under the new Clerical Government? What is this 'Progress'?"

"Well, *Kinder*," replied the Burgomaster, "I don't myself know, but I am going to Vienna and will ask Schuschnigg." In due course he was received by the Chancellor and put Tyrolese perplexities before him. "I'll soon show you," replied Schuschnigg. "Look out of the window at the Ballplatz and tell me what you see." "I see a motor car and a man getting out of it," answered the Tyrolese. "Good. Now if you come next year you will see two motors and two men getting out of them, and in two years time four motors and four men getting out of them. That is what I mean by Austria's Progress!"

Returned to his village, the Burgomaster summoned his elders and said: "Well, the Chancellor explained to me what Austria's Progress under his regime means. Look out of window and tell me what you see."

"Why, I only see our village church and a dirty beggar sitting on the doorstep," answered Sepp Bauernreither. "All right. Now if you come next year to me and look out, you will see two churches and two beggars and in two years time four churches and four beggars—and that is what Austria's Progress under the Clerical regime means."

* * *

I have before me a singularly interesting French printed bulletin called *L'Informateur Marocain*. It is edited by R. J. Longuet, the son of the French Socialist who has just been on a delegation to this country. R. J. Longuet is Secretary of the Colonial Commission of the French Socialist Party, and editor of a paper called *Maghreb*, which the French Popular Front Government will not allow in Morocco, because it advocates Moroccan independence. I suppose, at heart, the French Labour movement is as keen on preserving the French Empire as the British Labour movement is on looking after British Imperial interests. This bulletin explains that immediately after the last Spanish elections a delegation from Morocco went to Madrid with very moderate demands for democratic rights, and warned the Government that Morocco was likely to revolt against the Republic if nothing were done to remedy Moorish grievances. The *Frente Popular* leaders, rejoicing in their electoral success, were incredulous of the danger and put the matter off; hence, according to Longuet, Franco's easy success with the Moors when he granted them, on paper at least, the civic rights and the autonomy which the Republican Government had refused them. Worse still, Longuet says that the whole of Moslem North Africa has been greatly affected by the contrast between Franco's prompt promises of freedom and the failure of Spain (Republican since 1931) and France (Republican since 1870) to do anything substantial to apply to their colonies the ideas they stood for at home. He says that Algeria, still arbitrarily governed after a hundred years of occupation by France, is now becoming very rapidly subject to German influence, and that French Morocco, which received a boat-load of 740 German tourists this year (four to five times more than usual, which means that they were permitted to go for propaganda reasons), is also likely to be deceived into expecting more liberty from Fascism than from slow-working democracy. French democracy has been more sensible about Tunis, whose demands were granted, but in Longuet's view, it must quickly agree to the demands of French Morocco, which have long been advocated by the French Socialists and Communists, if Fascist influence is not to be strongly entrenched in French North Africa.

* * *

I see that Mr. G. M. Young, in the current *London Mercury*, has had another good-natured smack at our young poets. He attacks the current taste for "sprung rhythm"—i.e., the division of the line into musical bars, each bar containing one stress, either alone or followed by a varying number of "slack" syllables. His argument is that if you get too far from conventional metres, the resulting rhythms will cease to be poetry; and he quotes examples of lines by Day Lewis, Auden and others, side by side with lines from the past, to prove his point. He accuses Day Lewis, bluntly, of not scanning. "A line scans," he says, "when it can be sung to an easy and popular tune." It is agreeable to think of Mr. Young singing *The Magnetic Mountain* to songs from the Hippodrome or Hymns Ancient and Modern and rejecting those poems which won't fit in. What I liked, though, about his essay was its tone, witty, discriminating, and delightfully precise—very different from the usual hippopotamus attacks by Mr. St. John Ervine and others on the young. Those who agree with him will find comfort in his admirable statement of their case; those who don't may be made to think twice. This number of the *Mercury*, by the way—enlarged for Christmas to 150 pages—contains other good things, an essay and five poems by De La Mare, stories by Sean O'Faolain and Kay Boyle, an article by Edward Garnett on Lawrence's posthumous papers. The cover in a new mulberry shade is charming. Altogether, with its Christmas illustrations, it seems to me to strike a balance between dignity and a seasonal festiveness which other magazines would benefit by copying.

* * *

Overheard in the street. First bus conductor, looking at the evening paper: "If the Germans have sent troops officially, the Government will deeply deplore it." Second bus conductor: "Gee, Hitler won't get much sleep to-night, will he?"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to "Dogger Bank."

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

I firmly believe that a lax sexual morality results in the existence of slum districts. If human energy is absorbed by matters of sex then cleanliness, etc., take a back place and the result is—slums.—Letter in *News Chronicle*.

Mr. W Gorman, K.C., for Miss Hull, said there was alleged against her the most terrible thing that could be alleged against any woman—that she was unchaste.—*Evening Standard*.

Sir Basil Zaharoff was a "best seller" in the literal sense, being the most accomplished commercial traveller of his day. But he also provided the raw material for a great deal of the commodity so described in fiction and journalism. His exotic name and figure were invaluable to those who find their spiritual recreation in what Mr. Wells has called "irrational moral rages." His real importance lay in the help he gave to the expansion of those armament industries without which both our peril of twenty years ago and our anxieties of to-day would have been redoubled.—*Observer*.

Working in a thick fog, and to the cheering rhythm of amplified gramophone music, two married women competed with forty-six men in the all-England sprout picking championship at Charlton near here, today.—*Daily Herald*.

In my opinion the B.B.C. is undoubtedly one of the biggest hindrances to recruiting. They have done their best to stop any patriotic impulse. The wave of pacifism recently engineered in this country is largely due to the B.B.C., coupled with "cold feet" and cranky idealism, although some of it may be due to sincerity.—Col. A. E. Ellwood, late officer commanding the 4th Batt. Lincolnshire Regt., quoted in *The Era*.

Unlike so many women who see in themselves nothing more than a logical, biological necessity, Princess von Bismarck is charmingly excited at being a woman.—*Sunday Times*.

MILK AND THE PUBLIC

MILK has come more and more in recent years to be recognised as a commodity vital to the nation's health. Almost with one voice, doctors and scientists urge us to increase our milk consumption, and point out the inadequacy of present consumption in relation even to the lowest estimates of national needs. It is common knowledge that milk, in its liquid form, enters hardly at all into the households of the very poor, and quite insufficiently into the great majority of working-class households. Liquid milk consumption per head is more than five times as much in the highest as in the lowest of Sir John Orr's six "income groups"; and consumption of condensed milk falls off hardly less markedly as income rises.

In these circumstances, it is plainly of the first importance that liquid milk should be made as cheap as is consistent with good quality in the supply. Only by lowering the cost is it possible to extend consumption to any significant extent; for though propaganda may make more people aware of the nutritive value of fresh milk, it needs lower prices to enable the great majority to afford enough of it. Indeed, the chief value of propaganda lies in arousing the conscience of the public to the need for making milk cheaper, and, if it cannot be made cheap enough to the general body of consumers, of ensuring a proper supply at specially low prices to those sections of the population which need it most.

Yet, ever since the Milk Marketing Scheme was set up, the State has been actually abetting the producers in making milk artificially dear. The scheme was expressly designed to improve the bargaining position of the producers, or in other words to enable them to sell their milk at a higher price. It did nothing at all to counteract this tendency by reorganising the methods of distribution, or reducing the distributors' margin. On the contrary, it created a situation in which the producers, organised in a powerful price-fixing monopoly under the aegis of the State, were bound to join hands with the distributors in fleecing the public. The consequence is seen in the fact quoted in the Report just issued by the Milk Reorganisation Commission (*Stationery Office, 1s.*), that in 1935, whereas other agricultural products were on the average only 5 per cent. (or including subsidies 12 per cent.) above the pre-war level, wholesale milk prices were up by no less than 76 per cent. Retail milk prices, as measured by the Ministry of Labour index, have practically doubled since 1914, having risen from 3½*d.* a quart to 6¾*d.* in November, 1936.

This is the more extraordinary, because there has been of late a rapid increase in the total quantity of milk produced. But the additional, or "surplus," milk cannot, at the monopoly prices fixed by the Milk Marketing Board, find purchasers among the consumers. It is therefore sold to manufacturers, who are actually subsidised by the Government in order to persuade them to make it into cheese, butter, and other milk products which could be imported far more cheaply from overseas. Nor is this all; for as the Government does not meet nearly the whole of the colossal loss which this manufacture involves, the rest of it has to be paid for by the consumers of liquid milk. The consumers are charged higher prices for liquid milk in order to subsidise manufacture; and the more milk producers supply, the more the unfortunate consumers are made to pay, because the more must be diverted to manufacture on account of the high prices.

This is a Bedlamite policy; but there are very powerful vested interests entrenched in its support. The farmers for the most part favour a system which erects them into a body of privileged monopolists with a right to exploit the public. The distributors are far less interested in increasing consumption than in maintaining a big margin between their buying and selling prices; and the manufacturers, in enjoyment of a heavy subsidy from the consumers and the State, are opposed to anything that would direct their present supplies of milk for manufacture into the liquid market.

The Milk Reorganisation Commission, is evidently well aware of the scandalous absurdity of the situation which has developed under the Marketing Acts; and it proposes fairly drastic measures for amendment. Foremost among these is the proposal that the power to fix milk prices should be taken away from the monopolists of the Milk Marketing Board, and vested in an independent Commission responsible to Parliament for its stewardship. Hardly less important is the proposal that, if the State wishes to subsidise uneconomic production of manufactured milk products, it should do so out of its own pocket, and not at the milk consumers' expense—though it is unhappily suggested that part of the cost should be met by means of a levy on imported milk products, and thus transferred to another group of consumable commodities.

In addition, the Commission proposes that the existing control of retail milk prices, which has been assumed by the Milk Marketing Board without direct authority, should be abolished, and each retailer be left free to sell milk at what price he pleases, subject to the continued fixing of his wholesale buying price under the reformed scheme.

The Commission is, however, doubtful whether this would achieve any considerable price reduction; and it is also hesitant in suggesting that large economies could be quickly achieved by improved methods of distribution—though it has no doubt that very large economies would be possible over a longer period if the reorganisation of the distribution system were taken firmly in hand. In the short run, it does not believe that the demand for liquid milk will be highly elastic in response to such price changes as can be easily brought about; and accordingly, in its desire to expand liquid milk consumption, it falls back upon the proposal that differential prices should be charged to different groups of consumers.

In this sphere, there is already in operation the special "Milk-in-Schools" scheme, originally started as a publicity measure, and now subsidised by the State. This scheme is excellent as far as it goes; but it does not go nearly far enough, and the Commission reports a tendency for the quantity of milk supplied under it actually to fall. Obviously, it ought to be extended to cover holidays as well as school-days, and to give a larger supply; and there ought to be parallel cheap schemes for mothers and for children below school age. The Commission further suggests cheap supply to those who fetch their own milk from a depot, and for consumers in the depressed areas. But it does not put forward positive schemes—only suggestions, some alternative, which should be further explored.

On this, however, the Commission confines itself to proposals for reforms of machinery, and does not lay down precisely what the policy operated through the new machinery should be. It also regards as outside its scope any concrete proposals for reorganising milk distribution, and passes this problem, with others, to the impartial permanent Commission which it wants set up.

It is obvious that, until we can make milk cheap enough in the ordinary market for consumption to be greatly increased, schemes of special cheap milk are desirable on economic as well as social grounds. For milk sold even at cheap rates for liquid consumption fetches a much better price than milk diverted to manufacture. Distributors will doubtless oppose such schemes as threatening their margins; but it will be monstrous if their opposition prevails over the manifest public need.

The entire reform proposed by the Reorganisation Commission hinges on its recommendation of a permanent Milk Commission, as a central authority for the industry as a whole This body, if the Report is acted on, will take over the fixing of prices, and will thus be in a position to regulate the output of milk by settling on a higher or lower price. It is proposed that this power should be used as a definite instrument for the planning of milk production, and that net prices to the producers, instead of fluctuating month by month as they do at present, should be fixed for long enough ahead to give the producers a basis for planning their output, and an incentive to reduce seasonal variations in supply—which they can do to a large extent. This planning would become possible if the State took off the shoulders of the industry the burden of subsidising manufacture, and also met directly the cost of cheaper supplies of liquid milk under special schemes. At present, the producer's net price varies according to the changing levies made upon him in order to subsidise the manufacturing purchasers of "surplus" milk. The aim of the reformed scheme would be to divert most of this surplus into liquid consumption, either by general price-reduction or under special schemes; but in any case the farmer's uncertainty about his net price would be removed.

Nevertheless, the National Farmers' Union is in full cry against the report. Its members are now in enjoyment of a statutory monopoly against the public; and they are not likely to give this up without a struggle. Only a determined stand by the consumers and the advocates of improved nutrition is likely to persuade the Government to act against the determined hostility of the farming interest.

So much for the report, as far as it bears directly upon the milk problem—admittedly one of the outstanding social issues of to-day. It has, however, a wider bearing; for the form of organisation proposed for the milk industry is assuredly applicable elsewhere. An independent statutory Commission, responsible to Parliament and consisting of public servants of high standing, who will give at least a large part of their time to its work, is as certainly the right body to be empowered to fix prices and output—where these are to be fixed at all—as a producers' monopoly on present Marketing Board lines is the worst imaginable. Such a Commission would not supersede the Marketing Boards of producers, which would be left full freedom to organise and regulate their trades in respect of their internal conditions. But price-fixing and regulation of output, essentially matters of public concern, would be taken out of syndicalist hands, and transferred to public bodies analogous to Public Corporations already in being.

The best feature of the Reorganisation Commission's Report is that it has squarely faced the fundamental iniquity of the Marketing Schemes as they now stand, and has set out the essentials of a "new model" organisation capable of meeting the consumers' legitimate claims. It is not necessary to agree with all the Commission's numerous recommendations on other matters to proclaim that this is an achievement of first-rate importance. Nor is it beside the point that nutrition is now so much a matter of public concern, and milk so generally recognised as a "key" commodity for improving the nation's health, that there should be an admirable opportunity, over this issue, for joining battle with the reactionary influences which have so far dominated the Government's policy.

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF A "SPECIAL AREA"

WHEN we first come to live in some degree of intimacy with neighbours of a different socio-economic class from our own, we can hardly fail to be struck by the marked differences in scales of value. The "tragic" and the "good" are apparently neither ultimates nor absolutes. All sound politics must have a good psychological base; and it was to observe the psychological rather than the physiological consequences of continued wagelessness in the most hopeless of our "special areas" that we went to Wales. Our visit was too short to furnish us with more than a few impressions; but these seemed important in themselves and relevant to urgent political issues. We had been nauseated rather than "touched" by most of the sobstuff with which so many professional journalists have lately regaled their readers. Real tragedy, in every class, does not usually lie so near the surface.

As we were arriving in the Rhondda after dark, and as neither of us had any previous first-hand knowledge of the district, we had communicated with William Noble, the energetic and capable Warden of the celebrated Maes-Yr-Haf Educational Settlement, which has, with limited means at its disposal, performed miracles of ambulance work in the beautiful but desecrated valley. We were received by the Settlement with the warmest hospitality, fed with excellent food, and comfortably bedded down for the night. The rest of the time we fended for ourselves, and wandered over the district almost planlessly. But that first evening we were taken to all sorts of going concerns, in the building up of which the Settlement had played the leading part—real live boys' clubs, largely managed and controlled by the boys themselves, with all sorts of games, gymnastics, and crafts in full swing—weaving, woodwork, and other hand industries in every stage of development, and educational classes of all kinds.

Thus the Settlement (and there are others in adjacent valleys) has helped to keep many a soul above water. The cultural and eudaemonistic value of such work is very great, and anyone who wished to do some personal thing, other than direct individual service, for the victims of our industrial disorder would be wise to send a cheque to one of these established settlements. No one, of course, imagines that the economic and social ills of the area can be cured or materially lessened in gravity by efforts such as these; but they have value all the same, and, until more fundamental remedial and reconstructive operations are performed, they might almost be classed as necessary.

Perhaps the most exciting institution we visited that first evening, however, was a large Unemployed Men's club at Ferndale, in the establishment of which the Settlement has taken but a small part. A big derelict building—I think it was once a bakehouse or a wholesale grocery warehouse—had been bought by the men for some £300 (it had originally cost thousands to build), and they had themselves put it into thorough repair, and fitted it with electric light, heating apparatus, windows, doors, and so on. In one of the great halls they had built an excellent stage, and at the moment of our entry were just putting the finishing touches to some scenery they had been painting. This club is financed and run entirely by the men themselves, and they obviously felt that it was truly theirs.

Throughout the valleys, poverty was everywhere, and the inadequate nutrition of the women and children was obvious; but we found the direct manifestations of this poverty less disturbing than were the courage and pride of its victims. Miserable as is all the housing provision in the area, domestic care and cleanliness were nearly everywhere manifest. Where there was a bit of brass, it was bright; the outside stone window-ledges were kept dusted and polished. Although one could see that few new clothes had been bought for many a day, these also were clean, carefully mended and "respectable." This is the kind of thing that ruffled our mental ease. We had occasion to go into the cottage of a family that for years had been dependent for the material needs of life on public assistance in one form or another. The family consisted of a man and wife, just past the zenith of middle age, and their two young sons. The parents were at home; the sons we did not see. Until a few years ago, the father had worked continuously since early boyhood; the boys had never been able to find employment. No one verbally complained, and there was still some element of hopeful expectation. It was evident that no one was getting enough to eat, that no small luxuries costing money had come that way for many years. Yet, with unostentatious dignity, we were shown into one room where still were preserved the lares and penates, the domestic symbols of a self-respect more spiritual than material in significance. One knew that, unless some miracle quickly happened, these also would have to go to supplement the inadequate "allowances" on which their owners were expected to live.

Why don't these people leave this played out area from which the available wealth has been gleaned? Well, in the first place, the available wealth has not been gleaned. Dowlais, to take one of the most stricken of the South Wales districts, has still within easy reach abundance of coal, abundance of the special limestone needed for the preparation of products of the highest contemporary economic value. Why, then, have the great works, which have drawn some ten thousand families to the district, closed down? It is in obedience to the "economic" postulates of the process called "rationalisation." By means of capitalistic federation, it has been found practicable to increase shareholders' profits by amalgamation and consequent reduction of overhead charges, reduction of personnel, and reduction of wages. In these beautiful, narrow, Welsh valleys, possible sites for modern industrial buildings are relatively few. In this particular part of the area, the buildings and plant of the Guest, Nettlefold Company occupied practically the only land utilisable for such purpose. Some few years ago, they closed down the works, leaving ten thousand families stranded. But that is only part of the story. The firm have taken the further self-preservative step of declining to part with their site except on the condition that, until the end of their long-term lease, no industry similar to their own—the only one to which the products of the district are peculiarly apt to which the people are by training and habit specially fitted—shall be started. For these workless men, nothing much has been done beyond the provision of the meanest maintenance allowance that will keep their bodies alive. Need we wonder if realists begin to question the worth of parliamentary democracy?

Desirable as it is that these people of South Wales should be re-established in our national social and economic structure, there are serious human objections to forcibly uprooting them from the district they have come to regard as part of their inheritance. Everywhere we found a love and appreciation of the beauty of the valleys and mountains which, in spite of scars, remain among the loveliest natural gifts of our country. The last thing we ought to aim at is to herd increasing thousands of men, women and children into our overcrowded cities.

In this area we saw no picture of dramatic misery and famine and tragic desperation; but we were struck by the absence of real hopefulness, eagerness and spontaneous gaiety. Everyone seemed to be keeping his or her end up, to be all too consciously saving the remnants of an ancient pride. The nightmare absurdity lies in the obvious fact that we, as a nation—through our Government—could, with little trouble and no appreciable individual sacrifice, almost instantly fill these beautiful valleys with hope, and, a little less immediately, with health and material well-being. What is to be done about it? Something ought to be done at once; bigger things ought to be planned and got going with the minimum of delay, and real remedial and preventive treatment should be started at the same time. These people, through no fault of their own, are being compelled to live below a true subsistence level. They cannot possibly obtain enough food, enough clothing, enough heat and light, on the starvation allowance meted out to them. The rents are often enormous; the rates are in some districts not far short of thirty shillings in the pound. The Government now proposes to reduce by at least a million pounds a year the spending capacity of the area. As an immediate piece of first-aid—as one would press one's thumb on a cut artery whilst more effective surgical measures were being arranged for—all "means tests" should be abolished, cash allowances (unemployment and public assistance rates) should be increased by at least twenty-five per cent., and the whole cost of public assistance should be transferred from local rates to national taxes. The absurdity of calling on a half-starved district like Merthyr, where sixty-per cent. of the men are unemployed, to furnish the money for the disbursements of its Public Assistance Committee could hardly be caricatured. These urgent measures should be and could be fully operative by the New Year. There appears to be no other way whereby increased purchasing power could be promptly and evenly distributed over this stricken area within a month, and there is no excuse for a longer wait. Among temporary second-aid measures that should be put in hand at once and be in full operation before March, are the temporary subsidising of foreign exports of coal and the compulsory re-opening of many of the pits. This alone would soon bring so many of the men in South Wales back into full work that the added cost of unemployment assistance per individual would be more than balanced by the reduced number of unemployed. Add to this the completion of the already planned bridge over the Severn, the construction of good modern roads from the "special areas" to the coast, and the building of a few thousand decent houses to replace the worst of the hovels in places like Dowlais—to be let, not at ridiculous "economic" rents, but at rents of from four to six shillings a week.

All this is little more than ambulance work. Serious reconstructional measures will call for rather more detailed and critical consideration; but there is no excuse for more than a very few months' delay in getting to work on them also. An industrial and residential town, freshly planned with a view to beauty and efficiency, should be built not too far from the coast; and between this and the derelict areas swift electric transport services should be established. But throughout it is production for use rather than for profit that should be the keynote of any worthy attempt at national reconstruction. If we are to demonstrate the superiority of democracy to rival forms of government, we should at least make a beginning of work that any of the European dictators would have done years ago. HARRY ROBERTS

FIRE!

ALL London hurried out to see the Crystal Palace on fire on Monday evening. The more civilised human beings become, the more irresistible apparently is their instinct to hasten to a conflagration. I do not know whether primitive man had the same instinct. His attitude to fire, I imagine, was more utilitarian and less aesthetic than that of a modern London crowd. He may have delighted in the spectacle of flames devouring an enemy's village, but it is unlikely that he took an aesthetic pleasure in seeing a house on fire in his own village. Even in the civilised world to-day as a rule it is only the townsman who can look on at a great fire as at a spectacle in the theatre. The Canadian countryman finds no enjoyment in looking on at a forest fire: the Australian countryman finds no enjoyment in looking on at a bush fire. The ravages of fire are to them a thing to be as much dreaded as the ravages of disease.

It is true that the townsman's emotions as he looks on at a fire are mixed. His is not the simple happiness of a child watching a firework display. He still feels the primitive awe of fire, and his pleasure is not merely a pleasure in the splendour of leaping flames, but the pleasure of curiosity sharpened and satisfied. He may even suffer agonies if he knows that lives are in peril in the burning building, but he cannot stay away from the scene. Disaster has its fascinations no less than scenes of rejoicing. In the course of time, I fancy, most men who have been witnesses of a great disaster that did not affect them personally come secretly to congratulate themselves on their good luck—good luck, not in having escaped the disaster, but in having seen it. There were probably old men after Nero's day who used to tell their grandchildren rather boastfully of the night on which they saw Rome burning. They may not have fiddled at the time, but their awe was not unmixed with enjoyment. A man feels a little the greater for being associated in a little way with a great horror.

It is an odd thing that in spite of all the devastations it has wrought among mankind, fire has so seldom been denounced as an evil thing in itself by the wise and good. Why, I wonder, should it in this respect have escaped the fate of gold, love, wine, liberty, religion, and nearly everything else that has brought bane and blessing to the human race? Gold brought greed, or at least an increase of greed, into the world; and, as a result, the ancient poets and philosophers cursed the day on which it was first torn from its hiding in the earth. Love brought disaster to its thousands and tens of thousands, and was damned by many good men therefor as a sin. Wine—well, in one aspect it is certainly a destroyer, and good men and better women have rushed to the conclusion that, if wine could be banished, this would be a world fit for Pippa to live in. As for liberty, see what a peril it seems to many modern Europeans, or (to be more exact) to the few modern Europeans who dictate to many modern Europeans. For religion, *vide* Lucretius, *vide* Lenin. Such things are dangerous, as everything in this dangerous world is dangerous and should therefore be abolished or suppressed. Fire, water, and air—three exceedingly dangerous elements—seem alone to have escaped condemnation. I wonder why?

There may have been some famous pyrophobes in the long history of well-meaning nonsense which is so important a part of the history of mankind; but, as a rule, it must be admitted, Prometheus with his gift of fire has been regarded as a divine-spirited benefactor of the human race. If I had not casually dipped into Shelley's notes on *Queen Mab* the other day, I should have thought that this view of Prometheus was universal. To my surprise, however—surprise, I confess, impossible to a man with more learning or a better memory—I discovered in Shelley that a case could be, and had been, made out even against Prometheus, and that it had been argued by a poet of some standing that the world was a better place before fire was invented. "Hesiod says," writes Shelley—and I do not doubt him—"that, before the time of Prometheus, mankind were exempt from suffering; that they enjoyed a vigorous youth and that death, when at length it came, approached like sleep, and gently closed their eyes." Even Horace, I learned—and I should have remembered this from my schooldays—suggested that Prometheus' gift of fire brought plague and fevers in its train.

To us who live farther north than Hesiod and Horace this view of Prometheus seems to savour of ingratitude. How numb one's fingers would be as one writes an article on a December afternoon if one were not a receiver of Prometheus' stolen goods, now flamboyantly exhibited in the fireplace. Fireplace—has the word a single evil connotation for us? Fireside—a happy fireside clime for weans and wife—why, it is the dream of all the best men and of all the worst men in their best moods. I once belonged to a club called the Fireside Club—a little paradoxically named, perhaps, because it met round the fireside not of a home, but of a public-house parlour, and weans and wives were not admitted—and the very name of the club made one feel a better man at the end of the evening's meeting. How, then, could Shelley, supporting himself by the example of Hesiod and Horace, bring himself to malign the innocent gift of Prometheus? You probably know the answer. In case you do not, I will tell it to you. Shelley was a vegetarian and—at that time of his life—regarded Prometheus as a scoundrel who had seduced mankind into eating roast beef, pork chops, and saddle of mutton.

After quoting Hesiod and Horace, he observes: "How plain a language is spoken by all this, that Prometheus (who represents the human race) effected some great change in the condition of his nature, and applied fire to culinary purposes; thus inventing an expedient for screening from his disgust the horrors of the shambles. From this moment his vitals were devoured by the vulture of disease. It consumed his being in every shape of its loathsome and infinite variety, inducing the soul-quelling symptoms of premature and violent death. All vice rose from the ruin of healthful innocence. Tyranny, superstition, commerce and inequality were then first known when reason vainly attempted to guide the wanderings of exacerbated passion."

And, in his anti-Promethean fervour, Shelley goes on to quote a passage from Mr. Newton's *Defence of Vegetable Regimen*: "Prometheus first taught the use of animal food (*primus bovem occidit Prometheus*) and of fire, with which to render it more digestible and pleasing to the taste. Jupiter, and the rest of the gods, foreseeing the consequences of these inventions, were amused or irritated at the short-sighted devices of the newly formed creature, and left him to experience the sad effects of them. Thirst, the necessary concomitant of a flesh diet [perhaps of all diet vitiated by culinary preparation] ensued; water was resorted to, and man forfeited the inestimable gift of health which he had received from Heaven; he became diseased, the partaker of a precarious existence, and no longer descended slowly to his grave."

From all this you may conclude one of two things—either that as good a case can be made out for detesting and denouncing fire as for detesting and denouncing gold, love, wine, liberty and religion, or that when men become doctrinaires they talk the most inhuman nonsense. Of the two possible conclusions I prefer the second.

The fact is, there are few things that are absolutely good evil in themselves. Even truthfulness, as Ibsen pointed in the interests of truth, may become a vice. Mercy itse may become merciless if it lets loose on the world a homicid maniac in response to a plea from a broken-hearted woman and justice untempered by mercy turns hateful. Liberty th men die for, worshipping her as a goddess, may easily chang shape into a painted hag; and religion throughout the ag has had aspects that were devilish as well as aspects that we divine.

Let us, then, not be too ready to accept the early Shelley' indictment of Prometheus. Prometheus may be responsib both for the Crystal Palace fire and for a certain gnawing the liver from which I am at the present moment sufferin But, despite this, how enormous are his benefactions! Th disappearance of the Crystal Palace does not affect me closely as would the disappearance of the Gas Light an Coke Company. If Rome once burned to the accompanime of Nero's fiddling, my own drawing-room fire burns in perfe innocence to the accompaniment of wireless music fro Germany after midnight. My very cigarette is lit b Prometheus. Without his aid the taxi that brings me hom would be as helpless as a dead donkey. Without Promethe there would be no coffee, no tea, no cakes, no ale, no home no theatres, no street lamps, no anything except raw frui and vegetables.

However much you may deplore the fire at the Cryst Palace, you must admit that Shelley, in his denigration Prometheus, was misled.

Y. Y.

THE MADRID DEFENDERS

In the broken house of man
Show where the pictures hung,
And the soot in the flue.
An era has gone,
Its death-knell has rung;
We have come with a plan,
We will build something new.

Is the Cross in the way;
The mysterious soul;
Individual love?
Then they fetter, betray;
They are ruins to move,
They baulk us, they stay
Our path to the goal.

Our love is another,
Much greater than one
For husband, for mother,
For wife or for son.
No longer human,
Compelled by our need,
Neither child, man nor woman;
An Act, not a Creed;
The People, the One!

RICHARD CHURCH.

Correspondence

OVERCROWDING AND EDUCATION

SIR,—I read the salient passages of Mr. Pindar's article to m class, giving them no lead whatever as to my opinion. "Can' you sue him?" was the first comment, and the second, "If w had a teacher like that we should all want to leave school." O course they were biased. That bit about being "neither cleve nor bright" touched them on the raw, and so did the classificatio into "dull, and not so dull."

"Why," said one, "I passed for the Junior County Scholarshi but didn't take it up." Said another, "I had the chance of goin to the Central School, but I wouldn't go. It's a 'Sissy' school." And much more to the same effect.

I am speaking of a Senior Boys' School situated in what an official of the L.C.C. Housing Department called a "super slum." Incidentally, the district is now being rebuilt, and, if I guess aright, some of the desperate villains in Mr. Pindar's den of iniquity have been decanted from us in the process. They are pretty lively over here, and I expect that when they get fresh air and elbow-room on the estate they get a bit uproarious. But they'll settle down.

Mr. Pindar is mistaken in thinking that boys generally dislike school. Of course, when they turn fourteen they want to get out, earn some money and be a man. This apart, most of them would rather come to school than stay at home. Quite frequently mothers come up to us to explain that their boys are kept away by doctors' orders, but that the lads are worrying the life out of them to be allowed to return. If parents have any criticism at all, it is not that we are too strict, but that we make things too easy and pleasant. This week we took a party to the Royal Academy of Music to hear an orchestral concert. A man walked beside us for a little way and said half enviously, half critically, that they didn't have things like that when he went to school. I have heard the same remark from dozens of parents.

No doubt it is very reprehensible, as Mr. Pindar thinks, for boys to kick up a row when they are left by themselves. But it must be remembered that a class of boys without a teacher are in a highly suggestible condition. A piece of banal drivel appears to them deliciously comic; and what artist, however untalented, could resist such an opportunity and such an audience? We have all got a touch of the Marx Brothers in our make-up.

The contention that boys who are the mainstay of the home out of school are passengers inside and not to be trusted is simply untenable. I have a boy who does a paper round before and after school. During his mother's confinement he was housewife and nurse as well. According to Mr. Pindar he would be quite different in school. In fact he issues ninety-five bottles of milk a day, keeps account of those who should pay and those who have it free, and sells the surplus like a milkman to the manner born. There are a hundred in the school just as willing. The difficulty we experience is in refusing the offers of the over-enthusiastic without choking off the enthusiasm

As to boys not remembering the schoolmaster, my difficulty is remembering the boys. Nearly every week former scholars come up to see us and they invariably say that they wish they were back at school. The boys in the class look sceptical when they hear it, and I don't know that I believe it myself; it is probably native politeness coming out, but it does dispose of Mr. Pindar's conception of schoolmaster and scholar as parties to an uncivil war.

Of course, the schools need improvement and every schoolmaster working in them is full of ideas on the matter, but Mr. Pindar's gloom won't take us far. He merely proves what we already know, that teaching personnel counts more than material equipment, and that the London unattached service is no place for a sensitive soul. W. RUDDOCK

SIR,—The article on this subject in the current issue of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is a mass of generalisations containing some truth and a great deal of exaggeration. The writer has evidently suffered deeply in some Senior Boys' Schools.

May I, as the Headmistress of a Senior Girls' School, draw the attention of your readers to one or two points? The children in the Senior Schools are not necessarily dull. If they were, we should have found a perfect mental test for children of eleven, and I think that no one claims that the Junior County Scholarships Examination answers that description.

Children are in a Senior School for many reasons.

(*a*) By the age of eleven they have not succeeded in reaching the standard required for gaining a place in one of the Central Schools of the neighbourhood. The number of such places varies from district to district, and children classified in Division D in one district may be accepted in a Central School, whereas children classified in Division C in another may be excluded.

(*b*) They have reached the required standard, but their parents refuse to give an undertaking to keep them at school until they are 16 years of age, and the Central School authorities have the right to refuse to accept them. In my own school are a number of children classified as A or B, but their parents refused to accept the longer Central School Education.

That they have not reached the required standard by the magic age of 11 years may be due to many causes. They may have moved from one district to another, and our schools are so individual in character that this means a certain loss of time through difficulty of adjustment. They may have had long periods of illness in the years before the Scholarship Examination and so have failed to reach the required standard in English and Arithmetic by the time they must take the one examination which determines the future of all children whose parents cannot afford to pay fees. They may develop slowly and therefore not prove their ability by the age of 11. Some of these are by no means dull.

The assumption that Senior School children are all dull is disproved in many schools even under present bad conditions. The writer of the article in question is right in saying that no children should be taught in classes of 40, 50 or 60; a school for adolescent boys and girls is given an impossible task when it is expected to train self-reliant capable citizens in classes of 40, and from among children who, for varying reasons, have failed to obtain a place in a school where classes are smaller and conditions more favourable. Let it be noted, too, that these children leave school and enter the industrial world at the age of 14.

I could write at great length on the matter of discipline. In many schools children are learning self-discipline, and there is no sign of the prison-like regime described in the article in any school I know. Children are frequently left in charge of their own elected class captains, with varying results, of course, as would be the case in any type of school. Children under the age of 14 who will work for the love of work without any outside stimulus or supervision are in the minority in any school. The best Senior Schools are endeavouring to "give the curriculum another character," but few children, by the age of 11, have proved themselves "at every point unsuited" for the "traditional literary education." Only in smaller classes can their varying interests receive due consideration. E. M. BACKETT

18 Palace Court Gardens,
Muswell Hill, N.10.

SIR,—Your correspondent, A. Pindar, asks whether Eton has its classes of sixty. Although never a scholar of Eton itself, I can assure him that in public schools classes of that size occur, especially those relating to some of the less-important subjects, as modern languages (German and French in particular) or present-day economics.

At my own school the three highest forms—the sixths classical, modern and science—were always combined for all the subjects mentioned above, irrespective of the ages of the boys, who varied from fifteen to nineteen, and of the period spent in their particular form. As a result the younger boys were never heard to give any opinion on the subject under discussion, partly because they were not asked and partly because they were nervous.

Thus all the more promising boys soon became crammed with the ideas that the master had been propagating for as long as he had been teaching.

This is no exception, as I have frequently discussed the same point with members of other schools.

The "trumpery stimuli" provided to intensify interest is as prevalent at public schools as at those which Mr. A. Pindar mentions. In this same school, members of the games committee, football "colours" and similar gentlemen were in far higher favour with those in authority, let alone with the hero-worshipping crowd around, than any who demanded individual attention for the possible securing of scholarships.

Expensive education evidently provides no further intellectual curiosity than the despised "elementary" This seems to be the answer to the ever-burning question, "Is our public school system out of date?" J. M. JERWOOD

Rosehill, Putney Park Avenue, S.W.15.

FOOD FOR SPAIN

SIR,—This morning the communiqué issued by the party of British M.P.s in Madrid states: "Already, starvation is at work in the city. It is evident that, by Christmas, actual famine may exist there."

A fortnight ago, a committee consisting of members of most of the progressive youth organisations in this country undertook, in association with the French Anti-Fascist Youth, to send to Spain on December 17th, a foodship carrying a hundred tons of sugar, tinned milk, coffee and canned foods for the civil population.

Already many tons of food have been sent in from all parts of the country, and this week three five-ton lorries are leaving Leeds and Glasgow with full loads for London.

But there is a danger that the departure of the food which is actually collected may be delayed, if we are unable to raise, by December 17th, the additional funds necessary to meet the cost of transport to Spain.

May I appeal to those of your readers who may wish to help send off this foodship on the earliest possible day to send some contribution at once to the Secretary of this Committee?

The Youth "Foodship for Spain" Committee, c/o The University Labour Federation, 37 Great James Street, W.C.1.
LIONEL BIRCH

THE ANGLO-GERMAN REVIEW

SIR,—I received to-day the first issue of a remarkable periodical, *The Anglo-German Review*, which calls itself an independent non-political organ. Most of the articles are written by Englishmen, but the advertising space is devoted almost entirely to German goods. Among its contributors are (1) Elizabeth Craig, "probably world's most famous woman journalist," who writes: "If I had my way, I would turn every Englishwoman into the equivalent of a German *Hausfrau* whether she were married or not," and (2) F. D. Bone, "one of the best-known and most liked men in Fleet Street," who writes: "So why should we be getting at their (German) throats and they flying at ours? God knows, except that we must needs protect Belgium . . ."

The first article in this "non-political" organ is entitled, "Herr von Ribbentrop goes to Town," and compares the German Ambassador to Mr. Deeds, the simple man who finds himself in New York surrounded by financial sharks.

In his editorial notes, Mr. Carroll states General Goering's uniforms "have won for him a measure of real popularity in this country." Lt.-Col. Baker concludes an article called "Britons Who Saved Germany" with the words: "We may perhaps criticise the prevailing mode of expression (in Germany) as histrionic and theatrical, but we also enjoy fireworks, are fond of dressing up and simply love a band. There is common ground here; it is worth exploring, and the Germans themselves cordially invite us to do so."

I have no space to quote Mr. Myles Mordaunt's vivid attack on the Bogey Book Club, or the Trade Correspondent's proof that Anglo-German trade is a "good partnership," "a well-balanced process equally satisfactory to both sides." But it is significant that there is an article on Austrian winter sports and a panegyric on Schuschnigg, "an Austrian Patriot and a good German."

The Anglo-German Review is expensively got up and entirely British. It would be interesting to know whence its funds are derived and what connections it has with the "Anglo-German Fellowship," whose Nazi propaganda is already notorious.

New College, Oxford. R. H. S. CROSSMAN

FARM BOARDS

SIR,—Half the fun of writing articles about Farm Boards lies in awaiting the results on your correspondent Mr. Schwartz. I will make him a present of the Hops Board as an instance of a marketing scheme that depends upon limitation of output, and he might equally well have our whole financial system as well, for there is no doubt that farmers would produce more of everything if prices and supplies were not factors that they had to consider.

As regards potatoes, the area originally registered for potato production was the largest since 1922 and since then another 30,000 acres have been added. The fee of £5 per acre, which, once paid, will never be paid again, is not sufficient to deter any bona fide potato grower. If he only grew potatoes for five years it represents no more than £1 per annum on an output normally worth £30. It is designed to keep out the speculator whom Mr. Schwartz seems so anxious to befriend. The "in-and-out" growers have been the curse of the industry in the past, and, on balance, have probably been responsible for less and not more potatoes being grown over a period of years. There is no milk products scheme operating under the Marketing Acts, as Mr. Schwartz knows perfectly well, nor is milk production being restricted.

I am grateful to him for mentioning the Bacon Scheme, which I had omitted. Far from causing restriction, it has created a new high record since organisation was introduced. In 1930 the output of British curers was 1,350,000 cwt. This year their estimated output is 3,000,000 cwt., an expansion of 111 per cent. So far as the refusal of licences to 38 factories is concerned, we already have about six times as many factories as are needed for this country, and their multiplicity is one of the factors retarding the efficient development of the industry. In about eighteen months' time the Development Board will have to find some plan for closing some of them down—not to restrict the bacon industry but to expand it. Until this can be done, it would not be very logical to license new ones unreservedly. So the refusal of these licences, although it deprives Mr. Schwartz of more fodder for facile sarcasm at the expense of those who are trying to do a practical job, is a perfectly reasonable action. L. F. EASTERBROOK

Treyford, Midhurst,
West Sussex.

SIR,—Mr. Schwartz, referring to the refusal to license new bacon factories, says this does not sound like encouragement to the industry to produce more bacon. Existing bacon factories already have the capacity to handle all of the pigs produced in the country, and more, and it would hardly help costs of production to divide the pigs among a larger number of curing factories.

Everything is being done to encourage the breeding of more pigs. I have seen farms which two or three years ago had only a handful of pigs but now have hundreds—the farms are, in fact, becoming factories for the mass production of baconers, and the pig population has risen from 2½ millions to 4 millions.

7 Bigwood Court, N.W.11. W. G. FRASER

CHANGING OXFORD

SIR,—There is a phrase in your Note of November 28th which is intriguing and enigmatic. After recording Lord Nuffield's colossal and courageous gift for the study of health and disease (a gift which realises the hope expressed in Dr. Abraham Flexner's famous report on Medical Education in Europe), you write that "in recent times the University of Oxford has grown used to living within its income, and rather fearlessly trying to keep cultivating the arts in an atmosphere of academic seclusion." Everyone in Oxford will thank you for this acknowledgment of the prudence with which the finances of the University are managed, and will realise that you and your readers do not forget that without large Government grants the University would long ago have been in Queer Street. But your reference to "an atmosphere of academic seclusion," which you say some people here feel that Lord Nuffield has blown away, is picturesque.

There are scores of scholars now working in Oxford under the happiest conditions of opportunity, privacy and peace. So far as my memory goes, there are more of them to-day than there were fifty-five years ago before the horse-trams jingled over Magdalen Bridge and when in September of the Long Vacation I saw the grass bright green between the cobblestones in High Street. I suppose that the three worst enemies to productive scholarship are noise, distractions and interruptions. In the main thoroughfares Oxford is noisier than it used to be, but comparatively few graduates have rooms overlooking busy streets, and we hope that the City Council will accept the offer of £10,000, made by the Government of the Federated Malay States through the Rubber-Growers' Association to the Oxford Preservation Trust, towards the cost of paving the whole of High Street from Carfax to Magdalen Bridge with the new and well-tested Gaisman rubber blocks. So far as distractions go, the Long Vacation is now a busy time, though not so busy as term. Those of us who joined in starting the University Extension Summer Meeting in 1888 knew that we were incurring a great responsibility, but the advantage of bringing people to Oxford and the College for summer schools and conferences seems to have outweighed the drawbacks. And another source of distraction, of which some people used to complain, is due to the nearness of Oxford to London. From the 'nineties onwards there have been many visitors from London, especially at week-ends. It was this change, I think, which, more than any other, broke into our seclusion. As for interruptions of another kind, the most significant change in my memory has been the great increase in College and University business and the resulting multiplication of committees. But at every period of academic change (and the last fifty years have seen a quiet revolution), the minds of residents in a University are unavoidably preoccupied with problems of reorganisation and adjustment. This is especially true in a University which is democratic and self-governing.

To be able to escape from irrelevant interruption is a boon to any man of letters or learning. Oxford, in spite of telephones, committees and traffic-noise, provides many means of escape. But if "academic seclusion" were used as a polite way of saying "disregard of the claims of common life and of ordinary people," I question whether it is good to encourage it or to speak of it as praiseworthy. Nearly all learning, and all of higher education, may be deepened by contacts with every kind of labour and experience, be it manual or directive, professional or commercial. It was the growth of Oxford and the emergence of new social problems caused by that growth which kindled T. H. Green's sense of public duty, made Sidney Ball a leader of progressive opinion and is giving us in Oxford to-day the influence of W. G. S. Adams, H. W. B. Joseph, G. D. H. Cole and R. H. Crossman.

Old Headington, Oxford. MICHAEL E. SADLER

THIS WAY TO PEACE

SIR,—Mr. Bertrand Russell discusses very sympathetically and helpfully my criticism of his arguments for total pacifism and my proposed alternative policy. May I answer him?

First, he asks why I think his book may "drive people in despair towards Fascism." I think so because a great movement for non-resistance would weaken this country (already peculiarly vulnerable and still the centre of a coveted Empire), thus increasing the likelihood of war; and to meet this danger the Government would take Fascist measures which, because of the danger, would win support even from many who detest Fascism.

Next, I think he may be right in saying that Denmark would not resist invasion. But even if it is wisest for Denmark not to resist (which is, of course, not certain), still Great Britain is, alas, very unlike Denmark. To carry out propaganda for non-resistance in this country while it is still the centre of a coveted Empire is perhaps of all policies the one most likely to precipitate a world war. The British Empire will have to be somehow peacefully liquidated before it can possibly be safe for Great Britain to be undefended. On the other hand, a change-over to a policy of mainly non-menacing home defence could be begun at once. Indeed, how could negotiations for a redistribution of mandates and colonies be kept under control (so that, for instance, there may be some regard for the interests of the natives) unless the vulnerability of Great Britain herself has been substantially reduced?

On the policy of mainly non-menacing home defence, Mr. Russell says: "If this were feasible, I should on pacifist grounds have nothing to say against it." Well, it is certainly far enough feasible to reduce considerably the likelihood of war. At present (as I have admitted) no adequate defence is possible—that is, we cannot hope to prevent all bombers from getting through or to give much protection to people in places directly hit by bombs. But it is possible (*a*) to decrease very much the proportion of bombers that may get through, and (*b*) to prevent the effects of air attack from extending to involve perhaps hundreds of thousands of people in places not directly hit. To do so will be to reduce, by methods that do not menace other countries, this country's vulnerability to a point where it will promise no decisive victory to a sudden aggression; and since no General Staff or Government is likely to risk letting loose the horrors of war from the air if it is not made desperate by the fear of a growing menace or tempted by a chance of a quick victory we shall be making war far less likely.

I am on my guard against making exaggerated claims for the policy of "defences instead of menaces." But can Mr. Russell suggest any other policy which would avoid both the danger of provoking attack and the danger of inviting it?

JONATHAN GRIFFIN

THE CENTRE FRONT?

SIR,—Critic's comment in your issue of November 21st on the platform association of Sir W. Citrine and Mr. Winston Churchill was most misleading and dangerous, because it altogether failed to indicate the sinister possibilities of such an association.

A movement which brings together Citrine and Churchill would, in effect, be a Right Centre, and by drawing in the Trade Unions to a Churchill development might have the effect of accentuating the divisions which already exist between the Divisional Labour Parties and the Trade Unions, and so lead to a split in the Labour Movement. And that would be a disaster. The development of a Right Centre under Churchill's leadership would isolate the Left and make a successful defence of democracy more difficult than ever. Let us have no illusions. Mr. Churchill's support of collective security is inspired by his desire to preserve British Imperialism. Sir W. Citrine has no belief in the possibility of Socialism in Britain in our generation. Such a combination, whatever it may achieve, can never defend democracy in a developing class-struggle.

Mere clarification of a situation is not enough, as Critic's comment seems to imply. Hitler clarified the situation too. Let us beware of isolating the Left in the name of democracy. Is it not significant that Sir W. Citrine will appear on the same platform with Mr. Churchill and not with Mr. Harry Pollitt?

26 Lyndhurst Gardens, N.W.3. D. R. DAVIES

GERMAN PROPAGANDA IN PREPARATORY SCHOOLS

SIR,—Most schoolmasters are prepared to concede a certain measure of tolerance to the opinions of grandparents, but I cannot help feeling that the bitter letter of my venerable Alpine critic, attacking the "Freundschaft" article in the current number of the *Preparatory Schools Review*, has transgressed the limits both of sweet reasonableness and good taste.

His method of selecting certain extracts from an article and putting a construction on them quite undreamed of by the author is not a new one, and although my personal inclination would have been to treat this gentleman's opinions with the contempt that they merit it does not seem fair to the members of the Preparatory Schools Association, or to the readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION to let such a mischievous perversion go completely unchallenged.

It is no part of a schoolmaster's job to dabble in politics, and the manifest political bias introduced by Mr. Dell in his letter, tempting as it might be to refute in detail, I propose to ignore as beyond my province. In answer to the unfair attack on the editor of the P.S.R., I have to say that he has never met me, nor at any time had any clue as to my political opinions, and, strange as it may appear to Mr. Dell, neither the editor nor myself has received from other members of the I.A.P.S. anything but letters of appreciation of the article to which my critic attributes such propagandist motives.

The whole idea of the exchange visit of which he complains so bitterly was to build up friendship for the future, and if Mr. Dell considers that the children of two great European nations should be brought up to regard one another as beyond the pale, merely because of the political differences of their parents and grandparents, thereby handing down a legacy of suspicion and hatred to generations yet unborn, he is taking upon himself a responsibility which no real lover of peace would be willing to share. E. K. M.

RECRUITING METHODS

SIR,—Our fire-eating pinchbeck "dictators" are becoming thoroughly uncomfortable about the lack of recruits for the Territorial Army. A week or two ago Maj.-Gen. Sir Alfred Knox, M.P., advised girls not to "walk out" with young men who refused to join the Territorials. This childish suggestion has, no doubt, been treated with the contempt it merits.

But much more serious is the scheme submitted to the North Riding County Council at Northallerton by Air-Commodore Godman, secretary of the North Riding Territorial Force, by which all members of the Council's staff who are eligible shall be compelled to join a branch of the Territorial Army.

A more cowardly form of blackmail could hardly be conceived. Presumably, if the staff refused to be intimidated into becoming conscripts they would forfeit their jobs, and with them the pensions to which they would eventually become entitled by virtue of compulsory contribution to a superannuation fund. I trust, however, we can rely upon the good sense of our shrewd Northern friends to reject out of hand this monstrous proposal, which should be repellent to every lover of liberty, whether pacifist or not. ERIC T. B. HICKS

59 Trinity Court,
London, W.C.1.

LORD NUFFIELD'S MUNIFICENCE

SIR,—Everyone must agree that "munificence" is the right word to apply to Lord Nuffield's provision for the development of medical knowledge in Oxford, as to the slightly earlier gift by Lord Austin for scientific research at Cambridge; and nobody but a fool would want to argue that there is not need of every help and stimulus that can be obtained for increasing knowledge. But how refreshing it would have been if some less orthodox don had quietly asked whether, great as the need of the University is, the need of the engineers, body-builders, painters, etc., whose efforts play some part in producing the Morris products that in turn produce this munificence, might not be greater? He would be a churl who looked a gift horse in the mouth, but it is customary to receive some indication of others who have contributed to one's presentation, besides the person actually making it. Good manners and breeding—and one looks for both in our older universities—enjoin that one ought to thank *all* one's subscribers. G. HALL

Aldbury, Tring, Herts.

HOURS OF WORK IN IRELAND

SIR,—Now that the question of a new Factory Act is under consideration, it may be of interest to hear something of the Conditions of Employment Act, 1936, which came into force in the Irish Free State on June 1st this year.

The main provisions of the Act are as follows:

(*a*) 40-hour week for all young persons.
(*b*) 48-hour week for all adults.
(*c*) No woman to commence work before 8 a.m.
(*d*) Adults can only work 240 hours overtime per annum, never longer than 12 hours per week, or two hours per day.
(*e*) Young persons can only work 200 hours overtime per annum, never longer than 12 hours in any week, or two hours per day.
(*f*) All overtime to be paid at the rate of time and a quarter.
(*g*) Six public or Bank Holidays with pay.
(*h*) Six days' annual leave with pay.
(*i*) No reduction in wages to be made, due to any provision in the Act as to shorter hours.
(*j*) No work after 1 p.m. on Saturday, or an alternative half day.

On the face of it this seems too good to be true. Here for the first time general legislation on hours of work is extended to apply to men; all overtime is to be paid at a higher rate; annual holidays with pay are provided for, and a 40-hour week is fixed for young persons. These are all definite advances on the Factory and Workshops Act of 1901, but in practice it is found that there is too much latitude allowed in certain circumstances.

For instance, if you make a week of 40 hours statutory for young persons and at the same time allow overtime to be worked you are back where you were before. Then, too, the Minister for Industry and Commerce has wide powers to exclude certain industrial undertakings from the provisions of the Act altogether, but in this connection it is important to note that before the Minister can make Exclusion Regulations he must first consult with representatives of the employers interested, and *also* with representatives of the workers so interested.

It will be clearly seen, however, that this Act, in spite of these faults, is a definite step in advance of past legislation, and those who are interested in the subject would do well to make a close study of it. MARGUERITE M. JACOB

69 Kenilworth Square, Dublin.

FACTORY INSPECTORS

SIR,—In your issue of November 7th the article on the new Factories Bill stated that 254 Inspectors had to supervise no less than 250,000 factories.

It would be interesting to know if this number included, in addition to ordinary factories, warehouses, docks, ships, prisons and other institutions that are visited by inspectors and which, because of the difficulty in reaching them, take up much more time than do visits to factories situated in industrial areas.

12 Langdale Road, New Brighton. W. P. ROBSON

[The exact total was 280,774, of which 243,516 were factories and workshops, the remainder being docks, wharves, quays, warehouses, and other premises coming under the Regulations. Ships and prisons, so far as we know, are not included.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

LIBRARY CENSORSHIP

SIR,—I do not think for one moment that the poor selection of books by modern standard authors, revealed in your issues of October 24th and 31st, at Kensington and Bloomsbury is common to all London Municipal Libraries. I know of cases very much to the contrary. It is certainly not true of the library services in the North and in the Midlands.

Following up the inquiries of Mr. Goldring and Mr. Glover, I decided to test the authors specifically named by the stock of the Central Lending Library in Sheffield, and found that not only were "better-class" authors well represented, but in many cases titles were duplicated and triplicated, as the following record will show:

Richard Aldington (26 books, 17 titles); Max Beerbohm (9 books, 9 titles); Norman Douglas (12 books, 8 titles); Douglas Goldring (13 books, 13 titles); Aldous Huxley (37 books, 22 titles); D. H. Lawrence (49 books, 35 titles); Wyndham Lewis (12 books, 12 titles); George Moore (31 books, 21 titles). Proust is represented by 6 volumes in English and 8 volumes in French.

The branch libraries, I am told, also carry books by these authors.

As regards the popular novelists of the past, Sheffield seems to reverse the practice of Kensington and Bloomsbury. There are in the Central Library: Ben Bolt, 6; Miss Braddon, 18; Winifred Graham, 3; Franfurt Moore, 4; Emma J. Worboise, 10; (W. E. Norris is not represented). It would be interesting to find out whether old authors become *démodés* sooner in the North than in the South, or whether there is a stronger sentimental attachment to old authors in London than in the provinces.

30 Thorpe House Rise, Sheffield, 8. JOHN WALKER

WILLIAM HEINEMANN, LIMITED

In our issue of November 21st we published a review of a volume of D. H. Lawrence's Essays, Travel Sketches, etc., by Mr. David Garnett.

Messrs. Heinemann, Ltd., the publishers of the volume, have taken exception to the last paragraph of this review, which they say reflects upon the management of their business and their publications.

We take this opportunity of expressing our regret that the review should have conveyed a meaning which was not intended. We appreciate that our criticism was ill-natured and unhesitatingly withdraw it.

Miscellany

ETIQUETTE FOR NEW MEMBERS

THERE can no longer be any doubt that General Franco is socially on the up-grade. In matters of etiquette the world still waits upon the fine old aristocracy of England, and it is pleasing to see that Italy and Germany have followed the example of Lord Rothermere, Lady Houston and Mr. J. L. Garvin in "recognising" the new ruler. All the best people in Europe may now be said to have called and left the requisite number of marked cards. As we ourselves had no difficulty in recognising General Franco from the outset, I think we may now take it that his identity has been established beyond all shadow of doubt. The only difficulty is that there doesn't seem to be a cop in sight.

At the same time one cannot help feeling a little worried about how all this will affect the General. There is always the possibility that his head may be turned by these social triumphs. After all, the society to which he appears to have gained admission, if not the most exclusive in Europe, is certainly the most rigid in its rules of procedure; and a new member would be well advised to examine his own social equipment very carefully, before wearing the Club Tie too conspicuously. There are signs that General Franco is placing rather too much reliance on the absence of black balls in the ballot box. Admittedly one of the qualifications for membership is a tendency to talk very loudly of the things which you Will Not Permit, and of the awful things which will befall those who oppose your Inflexible Will. But real shouting is the privilege of older members.

It seems only fair, therefore, to take the General aside at this juncture, and to point out to him that, although elected, he has still some way to go before he can attain the status of a Full Blooded Bawler.

(1) There is, of course, the minor detail that he has not yet conquered Spain, and seems unlikely to do so, unless the other members of his Club come far more actively to his assistance. But assuming that he manages to do so, he should take immediate steps to get himself *constitutionally elected by an absolutely unanimous vote of the whole country.* We have sufficient faith in General Franco to assume that he will know what steps to take. Thereafter, he should take a careful census of the population, so that in future speeches he will know the exact number of Spaniards whose demands he is voicing. This is essential. It is so much more effective to talk about 45,000,000 Spaniards occasionally than to keep on repeating "the great Spanish race" or "the mighty Spanish people." Unfortunately the number of Spaniards left to count by the time he has achieved unity may not be very large. But this can't be helped.

(2) Quite soon he ought to do something about a *title*. This is quite easy. The Spanish for "Boss" "Saviour" or "Miracle" would be adequate. *Strict* etiquette, however, suggests the Spanish for "Leader."

(3) He *must* have a shirt. Frankly, we cannot understand why he has not had a shirt ages ago. In his defence it may be urged that the problem of avoiding duplication in shirts is becoming as acute as that of finding new combinations of coloured stripes for Club Ties. Black, brown, red, blue and green are out, and white would mean a lot of washing. We can only recommend that the General should go for something in a chaste stripe or a thing with piping. But even there he will have to be careful if he is to avoid being mistaken for West Bromwich Albion or Aston Villa.

(4) Is there no body, race, or sect to whom all the troubles of Spain are due? After all, we shall soon be at the stage where a lot of people of some sort will have to be beaten with rubber clubs for the good of the State. Care is needed here. I don't think—I don't *think* it had better be the Basques. Somehow I don't think their attitude towards being hit with a Rubber Club would be Right. If all else fails I suppose it can always be the Communists and/or the Jews. But that would be rather Copy Cat. How about making it just the Lower Classes? That leaves a comfortably wide field.

(5) Whilst everyone realises that politically General Franco is a Real Socialist (as opposed to the bogus Red sort) I think the point ought definitely to be stated quite soon.

(6) Similarly I think his desire for Peace should be emphasised to the world. There is no need to wait until everyone in Madrid is dead. The convention of desiring Peace and Goodwill amongst all men is well understood. After all, one two hundred pound bomb, properly handled, brings peace to quite a number of people.

(7) Presumably Spain has made solemn treaties with *somebody?* Why this delay about them? A man who is going to be a proper bawler must realise that he can hardly be taken seriously if there is no evidence that his word cannot be relied upon.

(8) I imagine that the matter of Bilking Creditors is already in hand. I would remind General Franco, however that directly this war is over it will be desirable to point out that for the next few years general privation and lowering of the standard of life will be absolutely necessary in order to Be Prepared for the next one.

I do not wish it to be thought that these few friendly hints are dropped in any spirit of carping criticism. On the contrary. I feel that General Franco is doing very well, and that, given experience, he will soon shape into a first-class Bawler. Even his present rather amateur efforts have an authentic ring which augurs well for the future. I am only beseeching him for his own good to take it easily and learn the rules of the game first. At present he is a trifle raw. Over Barcelona, for example, even the *Daily Telegraph* became a little irritated, and suddenly remembered that General Franco was using Moorish soldiers "in a Christian country," and that he had dropped thermite bombs on . . . God bless us, some *Art Galleries!* General Franco should realise that even in the Bawlers' Club some things Do Not Pass—until one is a Senior Member. After that, of course . . . well, the Elected Voice of x million Spaniards can hardly be wrong. SHOVEL

THE KILN

THE opening of the Brygos Gallery at 73 New Bond Street is an event of promise. Devoted to products of the kiln, the gallery leads off with an exhibition of terra-cottas by Dobson and of modern English pottery by various hands. Dobson's latest work—there are a few pieces here which have been seen before—bears witness, as I thought it would, to an appreciable widening of the artist's scope. Gradually he is freeing himself from the influence of Maillol; an influence which has done nothing but good, but which by now has done all the good it can. It was time Dobson found his way alone, though always, like all the best sculptors of his generation, he will owe something to Maillol, just as all the best painters owe something to Cézanne. Also he is shedding the last rags of cubist academicism. Five-and-twenty years ago what was roughly called Cubism, and the idea of an almost purely stylistic art, caught the imagination of most of those young painters and sculptors who had any imagination to catch. For ten years or more it remained a salutary discipline. Since then it has become a nuisance, because it has become a formula. Distortions and simplifications which once were exciting and adventurous have fossilised into cold conventions: they are taught and practised with the same unfeeling professionalism as the clichés of the Beaux Arts or the mannerisms of the Slade. Probably it is true that no live movement ever dies; but Cubism has "holed up" for a good long winter.

So soon as the schoolmaster takes charge of a studio it is time for the genuine artist to jump out of the window. Dobson has made the leap, and has found himself, as you might have expected, in the middle of life. (In fact, the milieu is not new to him, since for years he has been admired as a sensitive portraitist.) From life he has now taken as much as suits his classical temperament. He has found in human moods and emotions, or, to be more exact, in those movements and shapes that betray moods and emotions, fresh inspiration. Needless to say, he has nothing to do with "rendering the passions in stone," nor in terra-cotta either: you need fear no Laocoons, no Dying Gladiators, but you may expect, in a perfectly modern and personal idiom, the graces of Tanagra and the humanity. I will not say that such a piece as *Noon* (No. 16) suggests a mood, though perhaps it does; but assuredly it was suggested by a mood. Both the composition and the treatment of detail were inspired by a situation, by a state of mind, by something, at any rate, at once human and external to the artist, which he perceived and appreciated and for which he has found an equivalent.

If in their grace and humanity these terra-cottas make us think of Tanagra figures, they resemble them in another and highly important quality; they are cheap. In a preface to the catalogue, which should be read and pondered by artists and amateurs alike, it is pointed out that clay figures are the least expensive kind of statuary; further, it is pointed out that the modeller's mediums—clay, plaster, lead and bronze—are just as good as those of the carver—stone and marble. It is high time that the ridiculous cant which arrogates some sort of moral superiority to stone-cutting should be laughed out of court. As the writer tellingly puts it: "We are invited to admire carving because it demands muscular effort (as if Art were a branch of athletics) and because it does not allow a mistake to be corrected. These are, in fact, its disadvantages. A composer would rightly welcome any method of lightening the mechanical labour entailed in writing a score. A poet would be rightly dismayed if he were prevented from experimenting with a variety of alternative lines." It is because the Brygos Gallery is to be the home of contemporary plastic art—using the word "plastic" in its strictest sense—that it deserves an enthusiastic and practical welcome.

It is to be hoped that our potters will respond to the invitation by making themselves a little more contemporary. I find it hard to believe that a man or woman of the twentieth century can express him or herself by imitating forms and colours that expressed Chinamen or Persians in the twelfth and thirteenth. Also I could wish that they would apply themselves less to the production of the *objet d'art*. Compared with Dobson's lively modelling too much of the pottery at the other end of the room smacks of the museum. It looks precious, it looks choice, it looks like too many of the things which at the moment we need least. What we do need are appetising utensils at moderate prices; and these are what scores of contemporary artists could give us if they would. Let the household gear of a middle-class family in the eighteenth century be the standard, not the model. Consider the cups and saucers, the jugs and plates and soup-tureens, to say nothing of the chairs and tables and upholstery, which, every moment of the day, pleased the eye of an English solicitor in a provincial town about the year 1760: remember that these things were not made by great artists but by very small ones who probably thought of themselves as artisans: and then ask yourself whether it is not setting a high value on one's personality to spread it over two square foot of canvas which is to hang, ikonwise, for no other purpose than to be worshipped for ever by the passer-by.

I am suggesting that the mob of gentlemen (and ladies) who paint with ease but cannot hope to interest us much in their honourable but not wildly exciting pictures, should charm us instead with useful objects which will be works of art without insisting on the fact. The Brygos Gallery is there to help them. The commercial manufacturers ought of course to employ them; for it has yet to be proved that during the last hundred years the general public has come to prefer instinctively hideousness to beauty. But the manufacturers and "buyers" are, I fear, past praying for. On the other hand, those educated people, an ever-increasing body, who at present scour the old curiosity shops and more enterprising emporia for agreeable objects to eat off and drink out of are all prospective customers. There are plenty of people willing to pay a pound for a presentable tea-pot. They know that some day it will be broken; and when that day comes they will say "damn" and get another. But to such people, to such good taste and good sense, Mr Cardew is almost the only potter here who has anything to offer His objects are pleasing to the eye, practical, personal and cheap. His cider jar is prettier than those public-house kegs, inscribed with the names of popular spirits, which are now so much to the fore in the homes of the cultured; while both in serviceableness and character it is, of course, vastly superior to the products of those sedulous apes whose sole ambition it is apparently to make something as good as old. It is to be hoped that the Brygos Gallery will attract more potters of Mr. Cardew's kidney and will sell their works abundantly.

CLIVE BELL

DECEMBER NIGHT

Listen. This winter night when fields are stark,
I lean across the frosty window-sill
To hear the dog-fox bark
Under the window on his prowl to kill.
Come, join me, friend. The night with frost is shrill,
And fox is rare and secret, seldom seen.
Look from the window with me, on the lean
Low form that slips to coops from sandy hill.
Look from the window: you will seldom see
A wild fox on the errands of his skill.
So, my companion, watch him go, with me.
Soon, all too soon,
His mouth will run with blood, a frothy frill
Red from some slaughtered fur or tattered quill.
Look from the window: you can see him pass
On slinky pads across the brittle grass.
Each blade stands up to sparkle in the moon,
Hoar with the frost, as bright as splintered glass,
Casting a pencil shadow, tiny mark
Of singularity. The world's a wisp
As fragile as the frozen grass is crisp,
Printed by footsteps that must melt with morn.
Look from the window: all is tranced and still.
The fox goes by, nocturnal visitant.

Let's follow him by trails forlorn,
To-night, this winter night by pad-prints crossed.
Let's follow him, that miscreant
Slinking between the garden and the thorn.

Come, let us follow on his trail.
He'll lead us to the woods, and there be lost.
So let us lose ourselves, and lose the pale
Feathery meadows moonlit in the frost;
Exchange the friendly house for bitter air
And danger of the night with fox to share;
Exchange the radiant meadows for the deep
Silent seclusion of the woods asleep.

Asleep? No, listen, for the wood's awake.
Woods wake while man forgets his ravelled days.
Listen, for woods their midnight secrets keep
And many whispers cross the forest ways
Beneath the beeches, threading through the brake.
Asleep? Oh no, the margin of the lake
Where trees are doubled in a liquid dream
Is animate with restless guests; the stream
Pouring through stone creates its harmony.
The margin of the lake within the reeds
Is livelier than the meads
Where placid sheep in moonlight rest, and be;
The lake where sometimes, like a myth, the swan
Descends, and for a day illumes
The water with his Greek voluptuous plumes,
And like a myth by eve again is gone.

The night is neither silent nor asleep.
The night is full of music, rich to creep
Into the hearing heart and pluck a string.
A string of recognition; solitude
Shared with each fearful, woodland, living thing.
For in the night of terror's reign
When the dread soul's beset by fearful mood,
And soul or body on a sudden slain,
Our hearts are joint with creatures of the wood.

Listen. Within the night I hear the cry of pain
Well up in darkness in a last appeal.
Some small trapped spirit cries, and cries again,
Tortured by fang or steel.
The ambushed dangers of the wood are wide;
Come, friend; let's push aside
The branching chestnut and the silver birch;
Let's go to rescue while our help is near.
But that shrill voice, our only guide,
Is stilled in greater terror as our stride
Blunders through undergrowth in search.
Poor foolish victim, taught by fear
To hush the cry when friendly steps approach,
Does unknown peril greater peril spell?
Would you not risk for present, tasted hell
The unimaginable heaven of release?

(Yet who are we to utter such reproach?
Have we not also shrunk beneath the leaves,
And suffered gins to fasten on our flesh,
Rather than seek an easy proffered peace
Which briefly comforts, tenderly deceives?
Have we not also shrunk from friendship's hand,
    And struggled out, alone, afresh,
By suffering informed and newly manned,
To face another maimed and difficult day?)

    Come, friend; come, let us go,
Since we must leave to anguish and to rain
That small pre-destined body in its pain.
    Come, let's regain the narrow ride
Where overhead the stars in bright array
    Stud a celestial corridor
With golden nails in heaven's blackened floor.
Come, let us wander down the paths we know,
    By pad of foxes trod
And bird-prints crossing on the silver sand,
Towards the riven oak-tree in its pride
    Struck by the wrath of God.
Oh, here did anger fall majestical,
Tremendous, when no man was by to see
The murderous lightning threefold split the tree,
    The stricken oak centennial
Blanched in the after-years to this dead thing
Laid out superb in death, laid out in state,
Sentinel boughs above it, like a king
Lying in state unburied, abnegate.

Or let us turn from this accordant death,
Magnificent in ruin though it be;
    Let us return
Towards the living pines that still draw breath
    And still renew their sap
Each spring untroubled by the thunder's clap;
    Let us, oh friend, return
Towards the pines that on the crest of hill
Rear naked trunks beneath the moonlight still,
    Proud, dark, and taciturn.
The fox is gone to earth with lawless kill;
    What matter? We have seen
    Beauty go by, an outlaw, free;
Beauty and ruin, secrecy and pain;
    This night we both have been
Linked with the heart of night, a certain gain;
Never to lose this freedom or this light
Dawning upon us in the deepest night.

Never to lose, and never to forget
Strength of initiation, gravely won,
But through the day's incertitude and fret
To keep this steadfast secret shared with none;
This transcendental truth of unison
Where we with nature, rarely tuned aright,
    Met more intensely pitched,
Descending changed by that high symphony,
    Changed, different, enriched,
Exalted to a faith in immortality.

V. SACKVILLE WEST

HELP FOR BRITISH FILMS

THE Report of the Moyne Committee, just published, is a document of first-rate importance to British films. The British film industry, when in a few years' time it has become (as everyone hopes) so firmly established, so flourishing, that it need no longer fear competition from Hollywood or anywhere else, may well look back on the publication of this Report as the beginning of a new era.

The Committee, set up last March by the President of the Board of Trade to advise regarding the nature of the new Act which must next year take the place of the ten-year

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"Quota Act," might have taken the timid line. It might have contented itself with recommending: (*a*) that the Quota system imposed by the 1927 Act—a system of which, in present circumstances, practically everyone, including all sections of the trade (except a few American-controlled renters), approves—should be continued, with one or two minor amendments; and (*b*) that certain other clauses in the Act, such as those concerning the undesirable practice of "blind booking," should be made more stringent.

Instead, it has chosen a bolder course. These two expected recommendations it has duly made. But it has added to them others no less important. Its inquiry, which the two large volumes of printed evidence show to have been exhaustive, revealed five serious evils hampering the industry's progress—"Quota Quickies"; unfair discrimination against short British films (which have included some of the best); grave disunity between various sections of the trade; lack of adequate finance; and the increasing danger of American control. The Committee has faced each of these evils. For each it has found an effective remedy.

"Quickies" is the popular name applied to cheap and worthless films made in this country by, or at the order of, American renting companies in order to fulfil the quota regulations (which at present insist that at least 20 per cent. of all films registered must have been made in England). The Committee recommends that all British films, before they can be included in the renters' quota, must pass a "Quality Test." Further, it proposes that the actual extent of the quotas in each year after the first (which it thinks should reach 50 per cent. by 1948) shall not be laid down beforehand in the new Act, as in the case of the 1927 Act, but shall be determined in accordance with the production of *good quality* British films during the previous year.

As to short British films, up till now included in the general quotas, the Committee recommends entirely separate quotas for these, both for renters and for exhibitors. Neither a renter nor an exhibitor will thus be able in future to compensate for the renting or exhibition of a larger number of short foreign films by an increase in his proportion of British long films. All British short films, moreover, will have to pass the same "Quality Test" as the long films.

The Committee has "been much impressed by the desirability of bringing closer together the varying interests concerned" in the industry, and "of finding some common measure of agreement between them in their various problems"—agreement which, it declares, has often been, and is now, lamentably absent. For this purpose it strongly recommends the establishment of "a tribunal to give impartial judgments on matters dividing the industry."

To apply the "Quality Test," to fix the annual increases in the quotas, and to serve as the necessary tribunal, as well as to administer the other provisions of the Act, the Committee urges the setting up by the Government of a Films Commission, composed of a chairman and not less than two, or more than four, other members, "all entirely independent of any professional or pecuniary interests in any branch of the industry."

To overcome the lack of finance, it suggests that the Government should take immediate steps to encourage financial interests to constitute one or more organisations to finance British film production, in approved cases, on reasonable terms. As for the danger of foreign control (all too apparent recently), the Government should, it states, keep a close watch on transfers of interests in British producing, renting and exhibiting units with a view to taking steps to prevent control passing into foreign hands.

The Report is unanimous. Its findings have already had the reward of widespread approval. Of the two recommendations which seemed most likely to arouse controversy—the "Quality Test" and the Films Commission—the former has received almost universal approbation, even from some of those who at one time advocated a "Cost Test" (an alternative which the Committee considered at length and rejected); while the independent Commission, assuming the other recommendations are adopted, has been generally accepted as the only satisfactory means of carrying them out.

Some degree of criticism will inevitably show itself as time goes on. The film industry could hardly be expected to adjust itself to such far-reaching proposals in five minutes. Its wisest leaders, however, once they have got used to one or two somewhat startling—and, to them, quite unexpected—new ideas, will surely agree with Mr. Korda, Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Wolfe and others whose opinion has weight, that, in the long run, they are in the best interests of all concerned. There can be no doubt as to the grateful acceptance of them by all those members of the vast cinema-going public who have enjoyed a number of excellent British films, and want to see many more like them.

WALTER ASHLEY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Art and Craft," at the Embassy

This is a fine specimen of the well-made play. Mr. Michael Egan—author of *The Dominant Sex*—is a good craftsman of the theatre: the plot fits together very neatly; surprises keep it moving all the time at a good pace; his characters behave in a temporarily convincing way, the comedy is well punctuated with a little seriousness, and the dialogue is consistently amusing. This may sound like a preface to the statement that Mr. Egan has nothing to say. Fortunately he has. His thesis is that women are a great nuisance to an artist, and this piece of misogyny is so expressed that some members of the audience will deduce that an artist is a pretty silly thing to be anyway, and that pretending to dislike women is only Mr. Egan's fun. This should guarantee the play's success. The plot is roughly that two nasty women and a sweet Irish girl are all after an artist. The two bad ones show themselves up and the Irish girl goes back to her convent, because she is only a woman after all. This sad ending will convince everyone that it is a serious and clever comedy, and everyone will be right about the cleverness. It is devilishly clever. Arthur Sinclair gave a brilliant performance as the Irish Anglophobe crusty retainer, Aideen O'Connor was a charming colleen and the rest of the cast were very capable. *Art and Craft* will be one of London's more intelligent successes.

"To and Fro," at the Comedy

With all respect to the management, who kindly removed our critic from a seat behind a pillar and gave him a better one, as far as the first part of the entertainment is concerned he wishes he had stayed where he was. It was not merely that the satires were pointless, the tunes feeble and the general material as thin as paper, but the chorus were not properly drilled, while the principals, perhaps not without reason, seemed to have lost all heart. After the interval the revue came to life considerably and both the Surrealist sketch, enchantingly played by Miss Baddeley and Miss Tree, and the Girl Guides, by the same ladies, were very funny. An admirable tune, "I Balanced My Budget," proved that one member of the company at least, Mr. Billy Kershaw, knew what revue was about. Poor Mr. Esmé Percy wandered from Bishop to Impresario, never failing to give a good performance, but blessed with no material worth performing, while Miss Maude Lloyd and Mr. Hugh Laing, first-rate dancers both, had two notably depressing ballets to cope with. The worst of a revue that sets out to be topical is that if it misfires the squib is so lamentably damp; the Gate Theatre does this type of thing infinitely better.

"Green Pastures," at the New Gallery

Technically it might have been better—the cotton-wool cloud effects and the unvarying view of the bulwarks of Heaven have a penny-sparing look one hardly associates with Hollywood's open-handed ways—but there can be no denying the tremendous goodness of *Green Pastures*. There is here a pleasure in simple piety that has vanished from a world grown sceptical about the native goodness of primitive communities. The negro actors brought to their realisation of the Old Testament the same sort of freshness that the Elizabethans used to re-create the "ancient Roman" in the image of all they considered noble. The Lord God Jehovah is benign and not tiresomely sublime, and the Archangel Gabriel is a secretary of secretaries, the yes-man of the Pearly Gates. Wicked sinners before the Flood are girls who play ukeleles and boys who "shoot craps" instead of going to Sunday School; angels live a life of picnics and singing. The throaty harmony of their choirs provides a sort of medium, a honey-coloured haze through which swim patriarchs and prophets, the humbly conceived milestones of the Old Testament. *Green Pastures* is a film so delightful, that to criticise its lost opportunities would be ungrateful. Remembering the loving gesture with which Gabriel polished a fleck of dust from the Last Trump, how perfectly the negroes acted and how moving it all was, we only wish that it had been twice as long. We read of persons who think this film blasphemous and want to have it stopped—one can only imagine they have not yet seen it.

"Come and Get It," at the London Pavilion

Gradually the films are becoming more intelligent. As the artistic asset of a sense of proportion is what the majority of movies has hitherto chiefly lacked (good subjects will come with the ability to treat them), we may be allowed a cheer when films as sane and expressive as *Dodsworth* begin to pop up more frequently among the *Woman Rebels—White Lady—Dark Angel* type of jellied entertainment. This *Come and Get It* is a lively, full, vigorous and closely knit adaptation of a big "period" novel—that's its great merit: it does a good job of reporting in words and pictures; Edna Ferber's book has been admirably translated into filmic terms of sight and sound. Here is talkie dialogue that is succinct and natural without banality; it builds up and interprets character in swift outline—particularly at a breakfast table, where the development, accretions and idiosyncrasies of twenty years of life are laid out before us as neatly as a pile of letters and the morning paper. It was therefore needless to introduce this effective scene with a caption informing us that twenty years had passed and that they had made a certain difference. The direction of the film is workmanlike and on the whole satisfactory—but the writing of it is even better. Both factors, and to a lesser extent the acting, are inferior to the intelligent guidance and achievement of an idea which made such a fine film of *Dodsworth*. Edward Arnold's part here is similar to Walter Huston's in that film, its import a crumbling obstinate tragedy reminiscent of the decline of Ruth Chatterton's Mrs. Dodsworth. All the other roles in *Come and Get It*, several of them lovable, are equally well played, with a sound sense of fitness. We may be in for a new film cycle, but it will probably show us talkies of a better type.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, December 5th—
Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
Spanish Concert, Scala Theatre, 2.30.

SUNDAY, December 6th—
Har Dayal on "The Case For and Against Pacifism," Conway Hall, 11.
Aylmer Rose on "Pacifism—Now," 153 Finchley Road, 6.15.
S. Osiakovski on "Art and Socialism," Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.
"Henry V," The Ring, Blackfriars.

MONDAY, December 7th—
H. J. Laski on "National Welfare and the Problem of Population," Friends House, Euston Road, 5.
"Lady for a Day," Everyman Cinema.
Dorothy Robson in Songs by Brahms, Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, 6.30.
Abyssinia Association Public Meeting on "Gas Warfare and Treaty Violations: The Lesson of Abyssinia." Speeches by Canon F. L. Donaldson, Prof. J. R. Marrack and others, Caxton Hall, 8.

TUESDAY, December 8th—
C. E. M. Joad on "A Collective Security that is No Longer Collective or Secure," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
Rugby Football. Oxford *v.* Cambridge, Twickenham.
Mrs. Charlotte Haldane on "Anti-Feminism and Totemism," Suffolk Galleries, Suffolk Street, Haymarket, 8.
P. A. Sloan on "Russia," Morley College, 8.
"The Witch of Edmonton," Old Vic.
Dr. Marie Stopes on "Some Biological and Physiological Details of Fertility," 26 Portland Place, 8.

WEDNESDAY, December 9th—
Opening of Peace Pledge Bookshop by Lord Ponsonby, 36 Ludgate Hill, 1.30.
Dr. David Katz on "Animal Sociology," 35 Gordon Square, 8.15.
Peter Fleming on "A Journey Through Central Asia," Smith's Lecture Hall, Strand House, Portugal Street, 8.30. (Tickets 5*s.* and 3*s.* 6*d.*, obtainable from the Organising Secretary, British Red Cross Library, 48 Queen's Gardens, W.2.)

THURSDAY, December 10th—
Speech by Bertrand Russell, Peace Pledge Bookshop, 36 Ludgate Hill, 1.30.
Miss Margery Fry on "Delinquency," Morley College, 7.30.

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BOOK VI. Gonorrhœa, Syphilis, Avoidance of Venereal Disease, Other Disorders of the Sexual Organs, Non-venereal Diseases of Women.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

JUST as *Daphnis and Chloe* is the archetype of all idyllic love stories, *Bevis*, by Richard Jefferies, always seems to me the pattern of all books for boys. There were exciting books of adventure long before *Bevis*, which was published only fifty-four years ago, but I do not remember any that combined the excitement of freedom with the excitement of learning how to do things for the first time. Those two things are what matter to the young. They have so recently escaped from the dependent helplessness of childhood that liberty is the first essential: they have to get right away from parents and schoolmasters and safeguards and to have nobody to consider but themselves. And then they must learn, almost by themselves, to swim and ride and sail boats and make machines and find their way alone over the moors and sleep out in the woods. *Bevis* is perfect in these respects. Bevis and Mark learn to swim and sail a boat; they make a raft and build a hut on an island and forge a muzzle-loading gun out of iron piping and then, deceiving their parents, they go and live on their island when they are supposed to be on a visit to some friends. Parents naturally never like this deception, but it is important as it is the measure of the boys' independence: a proof that they are deciding all things for themselves. All the really good books specially written for boys and girls are variations on the theme of *Bevis* and the best and the most popular of such books being written now are those by Arthur Ransome, whose sixth volume about the Swallows and the Amazons has now appeared. *Pigeon Post* (Cape, 7*s*. 6*d*.) must be looked on as the latest instalment of the saga centred round the exploits of a family of children in the Lake District. We are once more back in their native haunts and *Pigeon Post* appeals to me far more than *Peter Duck*, in which Mr. Ransome took us for a cruise of fantasy, or *Coot Club*, in which we were confined to the overcrowded waters of the Norfolk Broads. There is a certain loyalty in our hearts which makes us delighted to meet John and Susan and Titty and Roger once more.

* * *

I have complained once before that the children in Mr. Ransome's books are always perfectly well-behaved. They never quarrel or fight or take each other's things, or break any of the rules. Victorian children were always being naughty and on that account were frequently convincingly alive. Mr. Ransome no doubt hopes by describing such unnatural perfection to win as much liberty for his young readers as the Swallows and Amazons prove themselves worthy to enjoy; he is anxious to conciliate fussy parents, but there is a danger that he may encourage priggishness. Apart from this the chief criticism I have to make is that he has collected all his characters together in one big camp—Dick and Dorothea are there, too—and that it is difficult to keep track of what each of eight children is doing. The succession of adventures and of difficulties to be overcome is excellent. The chief features of *Pigeon Post* are the homing pigeons which keep Mrs. Blackett away from the camp—though I am sorry to say she does visit it—and which summon the aid of the fire-fighters when a great conflagration sweeps over the fells, and the hunt for gold in all the old mine-workings with which the fells are honeycombed. There is an interlude of water-dowsing and the digging and building of a well which enables them to camp on the edge of High Topps instead of in the valley beneath; a fine description of charcoal burning and the construction of a blast furnace which the children keep going all night, working in relays at the bellows, with disastrous results. Mr. Ransome is unquestionably the best writer we have of books for children, because he has a genius for describing just how to do the things that children all want to do. This interest in external things is essential, but the extrovert author suffers from the severe limitation that he cannot provide any sort of philosophy of life which we find in *Bevis* and, speaking from dimming memories, I should say also in *Huckleberry Finn*. Bevis has one theory of life and Mark has another, and the rival philosophies conflict in everything they say and do and light up their characters. It comes out admirably when Bevis and Ted are picking up sides before the battle and Bevis insists on choosing his soldiers for their intelligence without worrying about their size, while Mark wants him to pick brawn, and reproaches him that he has already lost the battle. Bevis answers:

> "I tell you I've got Cecil, who is as quick as lightning, and all the sharp ones, and if you say any more I won't speak to you again, and I'll have someone else for lieutenant."
>
> They worked all the afternoon in the bench-room. . . . They did not talk, Mark was sulky, and Bevis on his dignity.

Nothing so fundamentally important as this quarrel ever crops up in any of Mr. Ransome's books, in which there is a tacit assumption that there is only one common-sense code of behaviour which everyone does his best to follow: the philosophy of changing one's stockings when they are wet.

* * *

Two Boys Go Sailing (Dent. 6*s*.), by Conor O Brien, is an absolutely first-rate book for boys by one of the most experienced ocean yachtsmen who has made many voyages in his ketch, *Saoirse*. The two boys are typical English schoolboys who are sent off to stay with an aunt who takes in paying guests in a dilapidated house on the coast of Kerry. She has hired a boat for them and gives them complete freedom, and they spend their time making friends with all sorts of Irish people, exploring all the islands in the bay, looking for the treasure from a Spanish galleon wrecked at the time of the Armada and climbing rocks to photograph gannets. Finally they go off as part of a yacht's crew which has entered for the Fastnet race, during which, in very heavy weather, they rescue the crew of a steam yacht who turn out to be tough customers, and ungrateful. It is all very exciting and very well told, but it goes at rather too rattling a pace. Indeed, I sometimes wished that Mr. O Brien, who has the knowledge at his fingers' ends, would go into the kind of explanatory details which Mr. Ransome always provides. In particular there is the matter of the Brazilian jangada which sounds such a useful craft that one needs to know more. A small girl can beat the boys sailing a racing dinghy going to windward in it, yet it is only a raft twenty feet long made of six logs pegged together with a centre-board and a triangular sail. From the description it sounds an ideal craft for sailing on rocky lakes with shallows in them like Lough Corrib, where there are scarcely any sailing boats of any description owing to the danger of getting stove in. A capsize doesn't matter in the least and the jangada apart from the centre-board draws only an inch or two of water. Many readers besides myself will want to set about building one in the Christmas holidays. But of what wood are the six logs? How big and deep is the centre-board? How is the whippy mast stepped and what is it made of? Is it steel, or ash, or bamboo? It is for things like the jangada and for Mr. Ransome's blast-furnace that many boys read these books at all, for the young can use their own imaginations to satisfy their day-dreams better than older people. And so they are right to demand that the tips they are given shall be precise. It would not surprise me if Mr. O Brien got a hundred letters asking these questions. But I do not wish to seem ungrateful. There is a map of the islands in the bay and sail plans of all the boats. There are many pages, particularly one describing a risky bit of rock climbing, which were so exciting that I could hardly bear to read them. *Two Boys Go Sailing* has just the right blend of realism (the stench of the sea-birds droppings over which the climbers have to crawl) and of romance. *Two Boys Go Sailing* is a real success, and it will start many boys sailing, not only in the world of dreams and day-dreams, but wherever there is water and whenever there is a wind. That is why I insist on details of the jangada.

DAVID GARNETT

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CONTENTS

INDIGO HEIGHT. By Jack B. Yeats . . . . . . Page 899
REVIEWS:
Books for the Stocking. By Rosamond Lehmann . . . 900
Babar the King. By H. E. Bates 902
The Daughters of Gentlefolk. By Arthur Marshall . . 904
The Information Department. By Barrington Gates . . 906
Story-Books. By K. John 908
Sabbath-Breaker's Compendium. By George Scott Moncrieff 910
Hospital Grievances. By Harry Roberts 912
Pretty Pictures. By Roger Marvell 912
Again the Problem of Time. By C. E. M. Joad . . . 916
Far and Wide. By Keidrych Rhys 918
The Tragic Muse. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor . . . 920
Against Unreason. By Robert Waller 922
A New Standard Work. By Harold J. Laski 922
Pattern Making. By J. A. Hobson 924
Chaps and Maps. By Geoffrey Parsons 926
A Colonial Retrospect. By W. M. Macmillan . . . 928
Japan's Many Faces. By Freda Utley 928
The Middle-class Child. By V. S. Prichett 931
Forbes of Culloden. By Donald Carswell 934
Christmas Cards 934
Shorter Notice 934

INDIGO HEIGHT

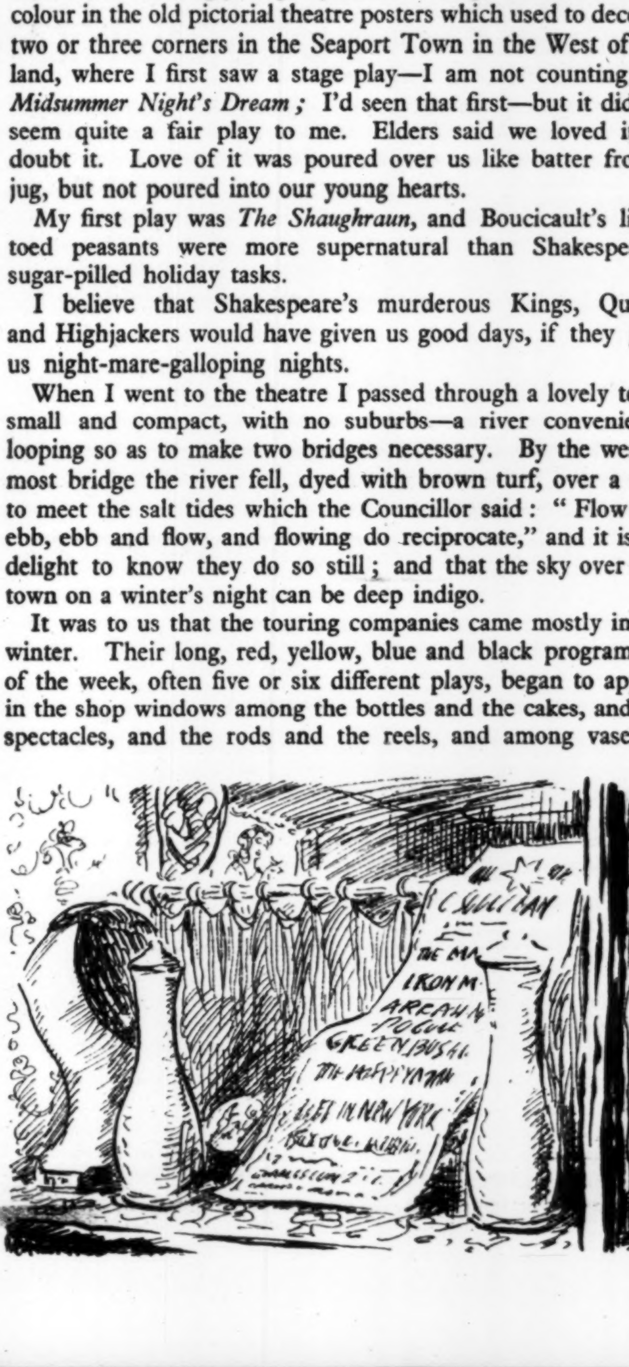
I KNOW that indigo is not a primary colour. But it's an axle, the top of a Giant Stride, from which the ropes dangle in quietude, but swing out wide in movement, when from the end of each a strong young boy floats. Indigo was the strongest colour in the old pictorial theatre posters which used to decorate two or three corners in the Seaport Town in the West of Ireland, where I first saw a stage play—I am not counting *The Midsummer Night's Dream;* I'd seen that first—but it did not seem quite a fair play to me. Elders said we loved it. I doubt it. Love of it was poured over us like batter from a jug, but not poured into our young hearts.

My first play was *The Shaughraun,* and Boucicault's light-toed peasants were more supernatural than Shakespeare's sugar-pilled holiday tasks.

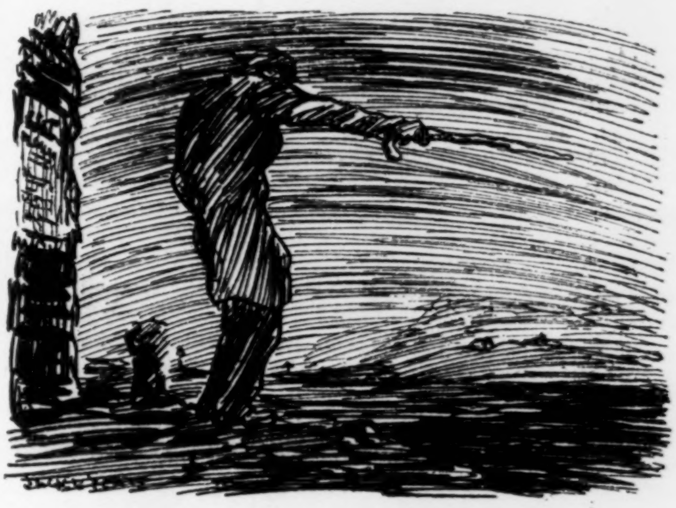
I believe that Shakespeare's murderous Kings, Queens and Highjackers would have given us good days, if they gave us night-mare-galloping nights.

When I went to the theatre I passed through a lovely town, small and compact, with no suburbs—a river conveniently looping so as to make two bridges necessary. By the westermost bridge the river fell, dyed with brown turf, over a weir to meet the salt tides which the Councillor said: "Flow and ebb, ebb and flow, and flowing do reciprocate," and it is my delight to know they do so still; and that the sky over that town on a winter's night can be deep indigo.

It was to us that the touring companies came mostly in the winter. Their long, red, yellow, blue and black programmes of the week, often five or six different plays, began to appear in the shop windows among the bottles and the cakes, and the spectacles, and the rods and the reels, and among vases of yellow mixture in the hairdresser's window. That yellow mixture which could make your hair a great curling bush, so that ardent men could walk about carrying their own Vallombrosa with them. Smaller boys were all on the side of the Shearers in those days, unattended locks grew so fast. A friend of mine, a delicate boy, going with me to the hairdressers, had given him by his parents a little bottle full of whiskey, which the barber was to rub in my friend's head for fear of a chill. The barber drew the cork on the landing, and certainly rubbed some of the "life-giver" into the small head with the tips of his broad fingers. At the time I thought that my friend's parents were very simple and the barber crafty, but now I know that the whiskey was intended as a delicate attention to the barber, so that he could drink to the health of the young head as he brushed the fallen sheaves away.



As I walked along to the Town Hall, the windows, all alight, would shine above me, and down below the salt and fresh water, reciprocating and commingled, would make a gurgling purring noise like a cat negotiating a tangled fur heap between her arm-pit and her breast bone. As soon as I got to the door of the Hall, even before I climbed the stairs, I would hear the quay-side workers stamping their feet and whistling for the Overture to begin. The quay-side men, if there were ships in harbour and heavy rushes of work, were the most constant supporters of the theatre. They did not enjoy everything, but they enjoyed *My Sweetheart* and *Called Back. Called Back* must have soon spread far away on to the roads, for the book from which the play was taken was still holding its sway in front as the star of shilling shockers.



Just below the Town Hall lay the quays, and so the theatre and the sea were close together in my imagination. The sea was the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic Ocean was America. But the indigo sky by a short link bothered little about sea and made it easy to snatch a boy's rippling imagination high, all clear aft, all clear ahead to the American shore. Some true depth of that indigo they say is the colour of the stratosphere. I hadn't heard the word then. Perhaps I should have heard it before, but I only heard it the other day for the first time. Fancy, I might have been shot up into it and not known what to call it.

Sometimes the tide, as I walked above it, was in and welling. Sometimes it was out and trickling further. But always the river place was dark with its own colour, never, it seems to me now, reflecting the indigo above. Though, once or twice, a theatrical eyed moon glistened on the broken water. But even so the foam had its own bog water yellow with none of that shining Blue Soap effect so loved by those who saw the moon but once—a transparent one, dancing over a canvas sea.

Further to the westward, the quays ended with the Scotch Boat's Berth. And the quays had two or three watchmen, old men—perhaps now they would be old age pensioners. At that time they drew their pensions from all ages.

They were mostly comfortless looking men to me. Even from my short legs they seemed to me incredibly old and bent.

I asked a hale man, a critic of others and lately retired from the sea, what one of these watchmen could do for a drowning man struggling in the dark waters so far below the stratosphere (only I hadn't the word then). The hale seaman said to me: "If a drowning man cried 'help,' and the watchman heard him, he'd go to the edge of the quay by the Scotch Boat Shed, and he'd hold out his stick, and he'd say: 'Do you see my stick? do you see my stick?' 'I do,' the drowning man'll say. 'Well, that's all I can do for you now. You will be picked up at the Ballast Bank in the morning.'" Authority's last signal. Under the indigo. Jack B. Yeats

BOOKS FOR THE STOCKING

Johnny and Marytary. By H. B. Creswell. *Faber and Faber.* 5*s.*
Here Comes Mumfie. By Katharine Tozer. *Murray.* 5*s.*
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Mickey Speedwell Goes to School. By Austin Priestman. *Bale and Danielsson.* 2*s.* 6*d.*
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The World Was Gay. By Harriet Powell. *Oxford University Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*
Sun Before Seven. By Ian Dall. *Nelson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

I will start with *Johnny and Marytary* because it is my favourite and I see it is by the same author who wrote another of my favourite books called *Diary from a Dustbin*, which was a very different cup of tea but just as good, and it means Mr. Creswell is a versatile writer and can do more than one kind of book very well, so I am very glad. Now I feel I have caught the way *Johnny and Marytary* is written but I expect Mr. Creswell won't think so, so now I will stop giving a wrong impression. This is a delightful book for anyone from four or five. The children are seen quite objectively, and their adventures take shape with the cool fantastic precision of the childish imagination. The language is right too; and the attitude to animals; also the attitude to adults: a kind of easy-going resigned faith founded on a placid expectation of disappointment. For instance, when Marytary wanders about calling for her lost dog:

> At last Lady Nibnose came out on the steps in her dressing-gown and was very polite to Marytary and she said: "Oh, I wonder whether you would mind very much if I asked you not to do it any more, Marytary. You see, it is necessary for me to get a little sleep at night sometimes: and I am afraid you will quite spoil my poll parrot so that she will never say anything but 'Niggerboy, Niggerboy,' ever after, and that would be just a wee bit disappointing, don't you think? Thank you *so* much."

The fairies are the purest specimens I have found for a long time of that debased and suspect race. One or twice an echo of the accents of Mervyn Spinnerbrook—emptied, of course, of their menacing content—led one back to *Diary from a Dustbin*.

> Then Alf said: "I believe we are in France, Cap. Those squirrels went for me like a pack of young wolves, and no English squirrels would take and carry on that style."

Here Comes Mumfie is in a more romantic but equally uncorrupted vein. I haven't read the earlier Mumfie, but take it for granted this is a successor equal in amusingness and originality. The magic is exciting, with the proper sharp, almost acid, dreamlike matter-of-factness, and that "'Twas the night before Christmas" flavour about it which would make one tuck up one's legs under one during the reading aloud; and Mumfie himself is an endearing character. What makes elephants so attractive? Their legs and back view chiefly, I think. Mumfie may lack the sex-appeal of the immortal Babar, but he and his suits have, in the author's delightful illustrations, a moving quality of their own.

Giant-land is a reprint of a nineteenth-century nursery classic. It is the story of the adventures of fearless Tim Pippin in the Land of Giants and reads to me like an infant's vision of the Inferno mixed with the material and decor for a ranting, roaring, glittering, super, Drury Lane pantomime. It is a product of those breezy old times of literary and pictorial assault battery and bludgeon upon the little one's budding imagination, before the invention of such words as neurosis and inhibition; and is a perfect melon-bed for the Freudian research-student. Mass giant-murders, mass swallowings of humans by giants, beheading, buryings in quicksand, baths of blood, valleys of picked bones follow each other with the orgiastic gloom of courses at a Lord Mayor's banquet. The tone is morally robust, the language is fresh and fluent, the semi-allegorical characters have racy names, such as Death Stroke and Body-Snatcher. The illustrations by John Proctor ("Puck") are superb and unnerving. Lacking the scientific curiosity to try it out in the home-circle, I cannot gauge the effect of this remarkable work upon our unseasoned, confident, sceptical and over-sterilised young. The wrapper informs us that it was the favourite boyhood book of Sir James Barrie, Bart.; knowing which, the subject of his latest dramatic enterprise comes as less of a surprise.

A different pair of shoes indeed are *Mr. Horse's New Shoes*. This is a most light-hearted book, and rattles on at a spanking pace from beginning to end. Margaret Lady Sackville has a comic sense of adjectives, and uses slangy expressions in a way that made me laugh: though, since her verbal humour bears no resemblance to that of *Bubbles* or *Tiger Tim's Weekly*, I doubt if a child would think it funny. However, every child from four onwards will enjoy the nonsensical adventures of Mr. Horse, Miss Nannie and Mr. Peter Terrier, and delight, at an even earlier age, in the pretty, witty, decorative illustrations by M. R. Caird. The only fault I have to find is the to my mind pointless breaking-up and misspelling of some of the longer words: i.e., sit-u-at-ion (if so, why not "mortification" on the same page?), im-me-ji-a-tely.

Micky Speedwell Goes to School describes the adventures of a mouse in a prep-school for mice. It is an odd, crude, incoherent, sometimes funny, slightly dotty little work, scattered with puns and schoolboy jokes, and reads rather as if it might have been dashed off in last-minute instalments, between drinks of heady ginger-beer, by the wittiest contributor to the School Mag. The author has an obsession about inverted commas. "The mouse-man who took 'gym' was 'something like' a man-mouse! He was a 'topper,' really 'posh' in the eyes of all the boy-mouses." This is one sentence at random.

We begin now to leave behind the clouds of glory and approach a more sober country. *August Adventure* calls itself a novel for boys and girls; but my guess is that it will suit girls better than boys. It is of the realistic school of Arthur Ransome, with his eye for practical detail, but without his shrewd astringent nip. It describes the adventures of five children on a caravan trip in Devonshire, a subject full of possibilities; but to my mind it doesn't quite come off. This may be partly due to the fact that the children lack complete objectivity. Now and then a kind of wholesome English glamour is shed over them, and they unfocus into the jolly nephews and nieces of an understanding aunt. Boys will sniff this out distrustfully; girls, with a greater feeling for cosiness, might like it. There is, too, a touch of sentimental-patriotic boy-scoutishness. For instance, this, during a "specially good moment" after morning service:

> Jane looked at the Rover.
>
> "If you were fighting far away from England, what would you see?"
>
> He waited a moment. Then in a gruff and rather self-conscious voice he answered:
>
> "Mostly the Open Road, I guess . . and a certain girl perhaps."

There is a heath-fire, a haunted house, a thunderstorm; also a cricket-match organised by a manly and sporting boy "laird" with a keen sense of *noblesse oblige*.

> "And you captain the Melstow lot?" asked Bill.
>
> "Since Father died—yes. . . . Mary and I thought it wasn't a thing we ought to let drop, so we—well, we've sort of carried on, like we've tried to do with the land and everything."
>
> Mike said this quite simply, but Oliver could see that the "Laird" of Melstow had his PLACE at heart—and that that heart was in the right place.

The World Was Gay is a very enjoyable book. Miss Powell reconstructs a late-Victorian childish scene with a kind of sly simplicity and humorousness that manages never to hit below the belt. She gives the right importance to minutiae, attaches their natural, arbitrary magic to certain objects and places, seeing with the microscopic eye which Katharine Mansfield sometimes applied to childhood. Like her, too, she she slips up over children's clothes: knickers are always little knickers. These children are motherless, naughty and inventive, something after the Bastable style, with a worried, aloof and kindly father. The incidents are trivial: going to the village shop, things the maids or neighbours said and did, looking over the banisters at the dinner-party going in, wearing the wrong clothes at tea-parties, dressing up, having other children to tea, being ill, being sent to bed early. Such things seem now frozen in a frame, far back, a period piece. One's own children's

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'The best children's pictures of the year are Henry Rox's enchantingly gay illustrations to *Tommy Apple and Peggy Pear*, the second instalment of the fruit-and-vegetable saga which delighted us all last year.' *The London Mercury* 5s.

JONATHAN CAPE THIRTY BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON memories will surely be in a different genre. The drawings are in a winsome, daintye olde-fashioned greetings-card tradition; but girls reaching their teens won't mind this.

Sun Before Seven has also a period charm. It is about a late-Victorian childhood in Buenos Aires. Here again a visual world is presented in which nothing is between the naked eye and its object; the microscope reveals a glowing, luxuriant, half daydream world not unlike that of Mr. De La Mare, who contributes a foreword. The character drawing has a quasi-innocent Scottish humour about it, roguish with a hint of pathos. It is more a contribution to the literature of the child than a book for children. One is unprepared for the last chapters, in which the child is forced out into "real life" by being sent away to school. The dream becomes rigid nightmare, yet absolutely convincing. The climax, when he creeps into the violin case to die, causes the same sort of emotion in the reader as the childhood chapters of *Jane Eyre* or *David Copperfield*.

Rosamond Lehmann

BABAR THE KING

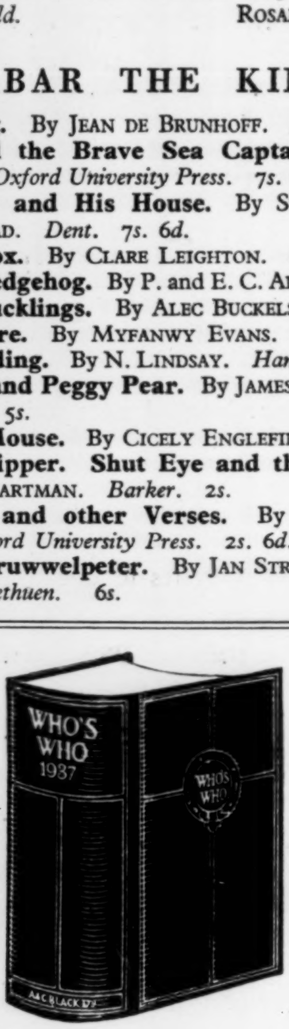
Babar the King. By Jean de Brunhoff. *Methuen.* 6*s.*
Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain. By Edward Ardizzone. *Oxford University Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The Little Boy and His House. By Stephen Bone and Mary Adshead. *Dent.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The Musical Box. By Clare Leighton. *Gollancz.* 6*s.*
Mr. and Mrs. Hedgehog. By P. and E. C. Ardley. *Collins.* 5*s.*
Three Little Ducklings. By Alec Buckels. *Faber.* 3*s.* 6*d.*
No Rubbish Here. By Myfanwy Evans. *Collins.* 3*s.* 6*d.*
The Magic Pudding. By N. Lindsay. *Hamish Hamilton.* 5*s.*
Tommy Apple and Peggy Pear. By James Laver and Henry Rox. *Cape.* 5*s.*
A House for a Mouse. By Cicely Englefield. *Murray.* 2*s.*
Nosy and the Slipper. Shut Eye and the Weathercock. By Robert Hartman. *Barker.* 2*s.*
Jonathan Bing and other Verses. By Beatrice Curtis Brown. *Oxford University Press.* 2*s.* 6*d.*
The Modern Struwwelpeter. By Jan Struther and Ernest Shepard. *Methuen.* 6*s.*

First a word to all those who, for reasons of time, headache, boredom, etc., cannot or will not read beyond this first paragraph. Let me say to them that all of these books are good; ~~that they~~ will delight all ages from two to twelve and in certain cases, such as Babar Rex, all ages from two to as high as you like to go: and that any parental, avuncular, and auntular speculators with a lot of infants and no time on their hands cannot do better than shut their eyes, aim a pin and offer up a sporting prayer. If, on the other hand, they are anxious to raise their stock and get on the right side of Freddie or Angelina or Richard or Julia for another year, they will do well to read on, when I, as the harassed parent of two designing daughters, will do my best to tip them the winners and show them the wrinkles. All of these books have been tried out on the said daughters and all tips are, therefore, based on stable information.

And after a long period of trial Babar is still supreme. I do not know if, in the third year of his reign, it ought to be necessary to proclaim or explain Babar. But since there are always uncles and aunts and parents new to the game, let me say that, outwardly and physically, in round flesh, Babar is an elephant. This is just about as much the whole truth as saying that Alice was a girl, or that Peter Pan was a boy, or that Donald Duck is a bird. Babar is not only an elephant, but a personage. Furthermore, he is not only a personage, but a King. And as a king he reigns with a wisdom, a dignity, an all-embracing love and a supremacy that altogether makes the dictators in Europe look like, so to speak, twopenn'orth of ha'pence. If ever a king ruled by Divine Right it is Babar. His state is beautifully Utopian. In it the weapons of war have perished or have been beaten into roundabouts. Schools, palaces of industry, palaces of art, swimming pools, gardens, theatres have all been built in this idyllic elephantine never-never land. And over it all Babar, still in a replica of that famous apple-green suit in which he was once photographed, reigns with that absurd, adorable, benign dignity that has made him king also of the nurseries of two continents. There is no doubt whatever about this creation of M. de Brunhoff's. The gay colouring, the humour, the delicious detail have all an absolutely unfading quality. He stands quite alone. There are imitators, as I shall show in a moment, but none so good. Back Babar, therefore, and sit easy.

"Imitators" is not the best of words. More correctly, Babar has created a new school of thought. M. de Brunhoff's success rests on the fact that he had the sense to see that, in a general way, young children are very easily bored by the printed page, and that the proportion of pictures to print, in books for them, ought to be something like a forty-acre field to a tennis-court. Like many other simple truths, it was very easily seen after someone else had pointed it out. So that it is not surprising, this year, to find an increasing number of examples of the Babar school—books, that is, in which the story is primarily told in pictures and embroidered by words and not, as for so many years, told in words and embroidered by pictures. Two first-rate examples of this are *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain*, a title which almost explains itself, and *The Little Boy and His House*, a gay little book with educational as well as pictorial value. In both of these, a small boy has adventures round the world and both books are, perhaps, more truly of the Yacki school than of the Babar. Yacki, it may be remembered, was also French, highly pictorial and comic, and altogether a book apart. Miss Leighton, being an artist first and a writer second, has already recognised the forty-acre-field tennis-court truth for herself, as lovers of her *The Wood that Came Back* will know. This book is a prime favourite, and—to abandon artistic jargon for what the experts call racing parlance—I have no hesitation in tipping *The Musical Box* as a winner in this year's December handicap. In fact, the book can't lose.

Nor can *Mr. and Mrs. Hedgehog*, which continues the adventures of Horace. The first book of these delightful creatures won a lot of money for backers last year, and there is no doubt that Horace and missus, plus the twins, should run well again in this year's race. The field against them is extremely stiff, however, with *The Magic Pudding* (Norman Lindsay up) sure to be running a fast race. This is an Australian horse, bred in the bush, and trained by the noble Society of Puddin' Owners, a powerful group composed of Bunyip Bluegum, Bill Barnacle and Sam Sawnoff. These are a pretty hot trio and the horse is strongly fancied in, as they say, well-informed quarters. I like the look of him myself. Another horse sure to be carrying a lot of money is *Tommy Apple*, a juicy little colt that ran well last year, and *Peggy Pear*, a nice coloured filly from the same stable. These look



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pretty good to me, peeping through the paddock fence on the book's cover. Other two-year-olds from the Cape stable include Lady Leek, Cissie Onion and Monsieur Aubergine—altogether a strong lot.

Coming down to what you might call the Shetland stakes, i.e., to small books for small people, Alec Buckels' *Three Little Ducklings* will take some knocking off. Mice are amusing, squirrels are charming, hedgehogs are quaint, but ducks are, always, anywhere and for ever, irresistibly comic. Witness the ousting of Micky by Donald. Also it is worth noting that mice, generally speaking, are very far from being amusing for most people, in real life; whereas ducks are even more comic in life than in books or on the screen. However, this does not detract from Miss Englefield's charming *A House for a Mouse*, in the same way as a dislike of real rabbits will not spoil enjoyment of Miss Evans's *No Rubbish Here*, which is a good old-fashioned once-upon-a-timer and none the worse for that. Before we leave the Shetlands for the Poetic Plate, in which that old-timer Struwwelpeter makes a great come-back, I must give a strong tip for the two horses from the Buffin stable. These are real Shetlands: tiny but really classy, and very nippy. With Robert Hartman up, they will be well among the favourites.

Finally the Poetic Plate: only two runners, with *Jonathan Bing*, nice horse though he is, miles behind that rejuvenated old war-horse Struwwelpeter. Trained by Jan Struther and prettily ridden by Ernest Shepard, this is the boy for me. By Hoffman, so to speak, out of Belloc, it is what Mr. Sherwood Anderson, who knows a horse when he sees one, would call a humdinger. What a humdinger is I don't know, but *A Modern Struwwelpeter* is it. You will, perhaps, remember the old Struwwelpeter: long hair and finger-nails, fidgety Phillip, naughty Frederick, the boy who wouldn't eat his soup, the boy who didn't look where he was going. This book was a sort of moral trousers' press: it pressed your conscience as flat as an ironed pancake. It was a nightmare. Take a look, now, at the modern version: at those awful kids who say O.K., and bump off their governesses, and eat too much ice-cream and cross the traffic lanes without looking. If your children do all these things, this is the book for you. Even if they don't do these things—in which case you should consult a specialist, not me—this is still the book for you. It should win by a dozen lengths, in record time.

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Prefects at Springdale. By Dorita Fairlie Bruce. *Oxford University Press.* 5s.

Susan's Last Term. By Winifred Darch. *Oxford University Press.* 3s. 6d.

A Schoolgirl in Switzerland. By Kathlyn Rhodes. *Harrap.* 5s.

The Winifred Darch Omnibus. Containing: For the Honour of the House; Cicely Bassett, Patrol Leader; Margaret Plays the Game. *Oxford University Press.* 3s. 6d.

Stories about girls' schools contain a truly astounding variety of adventures, but in one respect they are alike—the rampageous creatures depicted in their pages are one and all chockablock with gusto. Hither and thither, pigtails flying, the giddy things career, verve streaming from them. Stirring doings are afoot on every page, for if it isn't a burglar in the chapel it's a spy in the swimming-bath. Can Madge reach the top of the spire? Will Miss Pringle find Myrtle's bull's-eyes? Has Prudence unmasked the music master? One reads breathlessly on and on.

In *Prefects at Springdale* there is a bizarre recluse called Miss Peters who enlivens her conversation with cries of "Hoots toots" and "Tits, lassies!" She offers a prize for the most go-ahead house. The girls are in a great flutter. What shall they do to be go-ahead?

> "This idea at least," said their house-captain triumphantly, "is entirely my own. It came to me—just came to me—in a blinding flash. Girls, this house is going all out for domestic science."

And they do too, eventually winning Miss Peters' prize, which turns out to be "a pot of exquisite Eastern workmanship, containing a dwarf cedar tree, gnarled into a perfect miniature." The names of some of the girls who receive this delightful award are Marion Banister, Louise Sturges, Isolt Kingsley, Tibbie Macfie and Fearnelith Macpherson.

The girls are all fearfully keen on a ripping games mistress called Miss Stewart, and can one wonder? "It isn't her beauty and her auburn colouring, but she's got that—that sort of glamour." In addition she has "a pair of wide hazel eyes, unconscious charm" and ever such a knack with a lacrosse stick. She goes for walks on Sunday afternoons with a plucky little junior called Faith Kersey, who has "eyes like drowned violets" and is an "undeveloped genius at throwing-in." It is Faith who canoes down the flooded main street to the rescue of two girls who are singing hymns while imprisoned in a ruined tomb. Need I add that the headmistress, a Miss Timmins, is simultaneously shinning up a high wall, and that she reaches the top?

Susan's Last Term is crammed with incident. There is a temporary headmistress, Miss Kirkley, who makes wild accusations:

> "This is the limit of limits!" cried Miss Vignes. "To hint that one of us bagged her potty little bathing-machine. What will Miss Ingle say when she hears it?"

Miss Ingle does hear it, and she returns, partly by aeroplane, to put things right. But not before we have met Anne Page, a keen scholar, who is usually in her own room "mugging up anatomy."

A Schoolgirl in Switzerland is a riot of violent wiggings from the headmistress and stern punishments. Lucia, who has a Sicilian great-grandmother, is to dance the Tarantella at an hotel for charity, but she takes the wrong shoe-bag. Elma hurries after her with the correct pair, gets caught in a storm, loses her purse and receives a tremendous reprimand, partly in French. Then Elma has to go back for her Kodak, misses the bus at the St. Bernard Hospice and is told to write out "I must remember to wind my watch" a hundred times in French and English. Then Rosalie smacks Elma's face for having ruined her water-colour sketch when attacked by a savage goat and, refusing to apologise, Rosalie is shut up in the sanatorium. Then Lucia is set upon by a lunatic in the Castle of Chillon and, soon after, Rosalie steals Gwen's flute and hides it in Elma's work-bag. Gwen is incensed and carries on like a mad thing:

> Gwen flung herself on Elma and snatched away the flute, recklessly pulling stitches out of Elma's beautifully knitted sweater as she did so.

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The chapter is headed "Trouble for Elma." How true.

And even in the holidays Elma is found in a casino, heavily made up, and Lucia is seen dashing about on the beach in a bathing dress called La Sirène.

In *Cicely Bassett, Patrol Leader*, a girl called Mirth, whose hair is described alternately as a "wiry mat" and a "wild thatch," has a "wicked glint in her eyes" and, a keen Guide, is longing to get the dairymaid's badge. She decorates Miss Atkinson's favourite bust with a red moustache.

The book contains some delightful verbs:

> "It's rather early days yet, isn't it?" fenced Cicely.
> "Won't you have some more tea?" hazarded Helen.

The head prefect is a gay, unrepressed girl, whom we find smoking and telling Cicely that she has "rather gorgeous plaits." There are also two girls called Grania and Maeve, and the noise of mosquitoes is described as "the *ping ping* of certain winged visitors from without."

In *Margaret Plays the Game* the girls are extremely fond of theatricals and of the English mistress, Miss Rylands. Margaret, who lives in a house called Red Clamps, is a splendid little actress. She does not hesitate to let herself go:

> "You were *it*, Margaret," murmured Thetis Standen. . . . "I should have wept in another minute. But if you're going on being so intense all through the play you'll be a rag at the end."

Rosamund, a girl with "red-gold plaits and dazzlingly fair skin," is head prefect, but:

> Rosie carries being "all things to all men" a bit far. I often wonder what she'll do in a really tight place where pretty ways and book-cleverness would cut no ice.

And in the same story there is a dare-devil called Doris Gilmour, whose heels are more than three inches high.

> And though the Head was too old-fashioned to suspect the presence of powder, *teint Rachel*, not only on her *nose*, Doris had boasted that on Saturdays she used a lipstick as well.

A word to parents. Purchase, by all means, any or all of these books. Your daughters will enjoy them. But don't be surprised if little Monica is one day found climbing up Big Ben or if dear Edith suddenly drops into the garden by parachute.

And lock up the ginger-pop. Arthur Marshall

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If one is a reviewer one has some rum jobs to do, and Christmas Books is one of the rummiest. At a time when writers, publishers and buyers of books go festally mad together in the usual effort to break all records of the G.P.O., why should I be alone in preserving a judicial and perspicacious calm? The queues of anxious pop-eyed givers filing with flushed faces through the bookshops are beyond my help. What can I do to cool the fever of poor Mrs. Britain as she stands with *The Jazz of Electrons* in her hand, wondering whether it would go better to Uncle Malcolm or young Marmaduke? Nothing; but by Boxing Day, Madam, your temperature will be normal again. In the meantime, away with the acute and gimlet-eyed industriousness which has landed me with this mountain of excitable print. I will not apply my usual virtues to it. I will skip over it like a hoary ram slightly inebriated by far from Christian pipings.

This time I have very unwisely been put in charge of the information department. If you are rash or rich enough to acquire this lot of books you may inquire within on almost everything. Almost everything, that is, which is concerned with collecting matter of various kinds, messing it about in various ways, and setting it to do useful or—as it is necessary to add at the 1936th celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace—destructive work. I am no good at this kind of fact. I am compelled to remember a lot about aeroplanes; all the rest goes gently and enjoyably in at one ear and (after about a week) out at the other. I rather think that factual Annuals are always with us at this happy time because, for most people, even young ones, facts flow enjoyably but do not stick. My inquiries within have been highly selective, but until the end of next week I am prepared to stand examination on the manufacture of watches, cricket bats, tennis balls, several parts of motor cars, ropes, pins, skyscrapers and postage stamps. I know how they dam the Indus to irrigate Sind; I know how they could, if they only would, condition the air of a London theatre to keep me awake during the play; I know what the *Queen Mary* would look like if she lost her way and landed up in Trafalgar Square (this is the kind of jolly nightmare at which Annuals excel); I even know that Sir Malcolm Campbell began life by underwriting newspapers against libel. I admire very much the skilful way in which writers and photographers operated upon me. The art of sending the reader away happy with the entirely erroneous but splendid feeling that at any rate he now knows all about *that* is a highly developed modern magic.

Miss Bruce is not really part of the Christmas hubbub: her book would give as much sober pleasure under a flowering lime as under the mistletoe. Beginning in a cave and throwing in her hand at the sprawl of big industry, she tells how men have worked in clay, stone, wood, metal, skins, yarn and foodstuffs to make life bearable and have mostly, as a by-product, succeeded in making it beautiful. This is a story loaded with so much fact and dragging so much history with it that one cannot expect effervescence in the treatment. Did Miss Bruce mean me to smile when she wrote "Wherever Henry VIII went he took with him a lock fourteen inches long by eight inches wide, which he caused to be screwed into his bedroom door"? She plods in her writing, but in her illustrations she is discriminating and often witty. The book contains, as it should, a lot about feasting and fallals as well as about pottery and cathedrals.

If you know a boy who is really interested in how an aeroplane is made to fly, and not merely how fast it can carry how many guns and bombs, give him Mr. Camm's *Model Aircraft Book* rather than a model aeroplane, which probably won't fly for long unless you know exactly what to buy. Mr. Camm is an enthusiastic professional who knows all the tricks of working in light wood to produce a small flying machine. He allows no nonsense about elastic power. If you want a glider you are told in this book exactly how to make one, and if you want power you will, under

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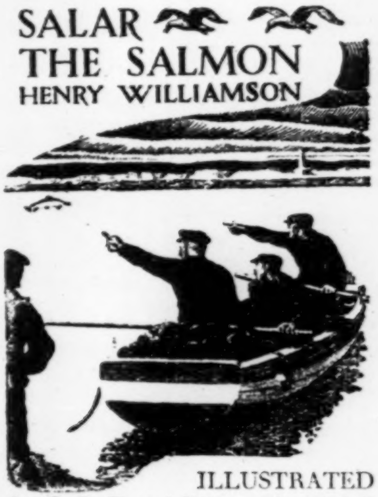

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Mr. Camm's guidance, be able to fit a tiny petrol engine. This book gets down to the brass tacks of the business. A boy with hands will have the fun of making, and of thinking hard about flight, under Mr. Camm's instruction; and I shouldn't wonder if he makes something that will fly. . . . War and destruction are written over about three-quarters of *Marvels of the Air*, and as a political animal I am against it. But as a father in particular and an uncle in general I know that this is undoubtedly the stuff to give the young dreamers in Air Forces, and I've no doubt that it will get to its destination in quantity. Of the compilers of this book, Oliver Stewart knows what he is talking about.

I was held up in a most unresponsive brown study by a sentence in Capt. Eyston's introduction to *Speed*: "When one's life is filled with the urge to travel faster, to speed to the utmost on whatever mount one has chosen, great interest is manifest in every sphere of movement." I do not understand that as well as those do with whom this book is bound to be a great success; but Capt. Eyston soon shook up my inertia and had me well away on record-breaking aeroplanes, locomotives, ocean liners, yachts, motor cars, push bikes, and even the unutterably slow human being, crawling over his hundred yards in a mere nine seconds. The photographer is a great ally to this neatly written book. I was particularly grateful for a frieze of Olympic runners, and a glimpse of Nurmi with his stop watch in his hand.

Mr. Low is a very experienced hand at making terrific engineering feats available (as they say) to those of us who can only respond, as we respond to the dazzle of the giant rocket in the firework display, with a fervent "Coo!" He knows how to mix this sort of thing: "The dining saloon (of the *Queen Mary*) would hold the first Cunarder, the Britannia, and the whole of Christopher Columbus' fleet. In each of the funnels could be laid a triple line of railway tracks, correctly spaced, on which could rest three Royal Scots"—with this sort of thing: "All main pumps, and there are forty-five altogether, are identical. They are of the horizontal duplex double-acting type, with a bore of 6½ inches and a stroke of 24 inches." One can, of course, play a nasty trick on Mr. Low by checking him over when he reaches something one knows about. "Horizontal duplex double-acting" is double Dutch to me, so when he got to aeroplanes (and Mr. Low is bound to get to aeroplanes nowadays) I was on the look out for double Dutchery. Except for a little nonsense about stalling speed he came through very well. This may be hack work, but Mr. Low has more than a hack's enthusiasm. He made me so excited about the Mersey Tunnel that I want for the first time in my life to go to Liverpool.

How It's Done has some riotous end papers by Charles Crombie which have nothing to do with the rest of the book except perhaps to demonstrate how a humorous artist can sometimes really do his hilarious stuff. Perhaps this put me in a benevolent mood with the rest of the book, for my fact-absorption coefficient, at work here on articles describing the production and organisation of common things (How your morning newspaper comes to you; A night in the life of a bus; Keeping the water of a swimming bath clean), rose to unheard of heights. There is nice attention to predigestion in the make up of this book, which is very good value at five shillings for the moderately inquiring mind. To satisfy a really burning cerebral thirst you must pay half a crown more and load the young encyclopedist with "520 pages, over 600 illustrations, 12 coloured plates, 150,000 words of interesting facts." Some of the coloured plates are villainous, most of the photographs are fair to good. As for the 150,000 words, I spent a happy half-hour in an extremely well-written botanical section; and then I intercepted a rapid world tour at Russia, where I was informed:

> The Russians drink a great deal of tea which they make in large tea-urns called samovars. They drink it from large glasses and instead of milk add a slice of lemon and some sugar.
>
> A few years ago there was a revolution in Russia. Many people suffered in it. But now the country is peaceful once more, and everyone hopes that for this vast land and its people there are better times in store.

But then, the trouble with any encyclopedia is that one fact is as weighty as another.

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Albanian Wonder Tales. By POST WHEELER. *Lovat Dickson.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Painted Princess. By MARTIN BOYD. *Constable.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Candlelight Tales. By ALISON UTTLEY. *Faber and Faber.* 6*s.*

The Man Who Caught the Wind. By MARGARET GIBBS. *Chapman and Hall.* 5*s.*

The Story of a Red-Deer. By the HON. J. W. FORTESCUE. *The Gregynog Press.* 25*s.*

Dreamland Fairies. By MARY GANN. *Duckworth.* 5*s.*

Jack o' Lantern. By MARGARET EUNICE NICHOLSON. *Rich and Cowan.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

A Story Book for Boys and Girls. Selected by GUY POCOCK. Everyman's Library. *Dent.* 2*s.*

The first volume in this heap of children's books has a place apart. It has been got up, rather unhappily, to look childish, but is in fact a perfectly serious little collection of folk stories, with nothing told-to-the-nursery in its style or attitude, and with an interesting appendix by Dr. Wheeler, on Albanian folk lore, which ought to have been an introduction. Only those responsible have preferred, so to speak, to stow it away in the cupboard, for fear it should poison the Christmas atmosphere. Not that the tales are anything but direct and simple: or that young readers won't care for them: on the contrary, this book would be an admirable present for any child, but more particularly for a child living in the same house with one, from whom, in the fullness of time, one could take it back. Its ten stories are, we learn, a mere fragment of the vast body of Albanian folk-lore, which has only just begun to be written down. And they present decidedly a new thing, a thing-in-itself, though old themes appear in them. They belong thoroughly and throughout to the Land-of-the-Eagle, which is at once background and element, and becomes visible even in turns of phrase: for instance, the passing of time is described in this way: "And a month went over the tops of the mountains." There are a number of these epic clichés: notably, "the white world," which one is inclined to read as a misprint for "wide" the first time it happens, but which turns out to contrast with the Albanian under-world, where the sun is red, the sky green, and the trees black; a world entered by way of the Moving-Mountains, which open and shut every noon. The mythical characters are, for the most part, wild, crude and horrendous, well suited to "the vast congeries of mountains and ravines which is the present-day Albanian kingdom": in fact, the man-eating Lubija, with "her body covered with red wool," and the giant Dif with his lice as

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big as grasshoppers, make our own native dragon appear quite civilised. The whole population is like some vivid though broken memory of an older earth.

And yet the tales themselves are not crude, or likely to make a sensitive child uncomfortable: far from it. They have the aesthetic and even moral stamp of an advanced culture: indeed, it is their particular fascination to present at one time so many different layers of human development. In detail, the narrative is immensely skilful; in outline, the layers occasionally seem to have got mixed up. A story may be all of a piece, as though invented straight off—like "The Man Who Went to Find His Angel," with its finely dramatic ending: or again, just as likely, it will get diverted half-way—as in "The Boy Who Stole the Nightingale." This tale opens on a high level of civility, without even a whiff of the fantastic about it: then, after two or three pages of the nicest art, suddenly changes its mind and becomes an adventure story, with quests, monsters, women in eagle plumage, and all the rest of it. Curiously enough, one of the most ancient tales in the book, according to Dr. Wheeler—"The Boy Who Took the Letter to the World Where the Dead Live"—has a similar, though less glaring cleavage: it begins as a wonder-tale, and then, in the name-episode, declines unexpectedly on a witty realism.

One would like more of these legends. I hope Dr. Wheeler will go on transcribing, and that next time he will insist on being presented more suitably.

Of the other books, my favourite is *The Painted Princess*, a very slim volume charmingly turned out. It is about a German Princess Erna, who rolled down a hill on to the fairies' tennis court, assuming *en route* the shape of a sausage, and had a face painted on her by Leonardo for convenience's sake. She then recovered her figure in an explosion, which landed her back on the courtyard of her father's castle a few centuries later. The story, as Mrs. Barbauld said of *The Ancient Mariner*, is improbable. Not so the heroine, or her cousin who ended up as another man of the same name. It is a neat, sophisticated little work, and distinctly fetching, but it should be given only to children who can appreciate style.

Mrs. Uttley has recast a selection of nursery rhymes in bucolic narrative. The rhymes are better. The stories, however, are very amiable and pretty, if rather aimless. They should be the delight of all the fairly soft-hearted, who like to read about cottage gardens and cosy firesides and nice cups of tea out of a blue teapot, and the final achievement of a high degree of snugness by all concerned. Mrs. Uttley writes charmingly, and has an exquisite flow of that kind of detail.

The Man Who Caught the Wind is facetious in tone, and almost bonelessly sentimental in feeling. Its stock character is the dragon: a poor innocent of a dragon, misunderstood but idiotically good-hearted, whose one ambition is to be somebody's household pet. In one story, this rather degraded being is called Helpful Horace. And the representative dragon-tamer is Henry Higgs—"Oh Mr. Riggs" to Miss 'Oneybun, his young lady in the pastry-cooks shop. Miss Gibbs knows her stuff, and I suppose this book will make a good Christmas present—though I don't think that, as a child, I should have enjoyed it much. In those days facetiousness only puzzled me, and created a vague uneasiness. But as the stories have already been broadcast, they have a public, no doubt.

The Story of a Red-Deer was intended by its author for "a young kinsman": it is an old favourite, a worthy and well-written but not very lively tale of wild life on Exmoor, now got up expensively, but not so as to attract children. *Dreamland Fairies* might please a little girl of old-fashioned tastes: it carries on, unpretentiously, the expiring tradition of a fairyland with the "folk" left out, a tame and humanised region to which good little children are allowed trips. As for *Jack o' Lantern*, I can't quite make out whether it is a children's book or not. I should call it the author's book.

The Everyman collection of stories is disappointing. Every kind of source has been drawn on, from Spenser (retold) to Marryat, Tolstoy and Uncle Remus, and all young people will no doubt find something to enjoy in it, but the editor has not really pulled his weight. He appears to have chosen his exhibits almost at random: he includes one or two stories, like Tolstoy's *Candle*, which seem out of place in this volume, and others which would be out of place almost anywhere—which "are nothing, be they addressed to what they may."

K. JOHN

SABBATH-BREAKER'S COMPENDIUM

The Scots Week-end. Compiled by CATHERINE and DONALD CARSWELL. *Routledge.* *7s. 6d.*

The proof of the week-end book lies in the week-end, and it takes a summer of week-ends conclusively to decide whether it fulfils its aim. Prejudging, I think that Mr. and Mrs. Carswell have edited the most promising successor to Mr. Meynell's original, and visualise many well-thumbed and diversely stained copies of *The Scots Week-end* by next autumn.

The components are chosen and assembled with sure hands, though, in the light of Mr. Carswell's scholarship, it is surprising that the least successful are the prose quotations. These have been arranged under two heads—the one section praising of the Scots and things Scottish, the other, usually virulently, in dispraise. As such they make monotonous reading. There is scope for rich compilation of little-known matter (frequently hard to obtain through being available only in rare or limited editions) from writings relative to Scotland in the past. Clerk of Penicuik, that prince of placemen, provides unconsciously more subtle and satisfying sidelights on the Scots' character at its most despicable than emanates from the trouncing of Englishmen. Highland scenery, if rarely successfully treated, has been better described than in the eulogies of William Sharp.

But with the poetry the editors have been contrastingly successful. Choosing many unfamiliar pieces, they have resurrected some excellent light verse. "Lucky Numbers" is followed by "Unlucky Numbers," a collection of bad verse providing space for the great McGonagall, but also for some little-known achievements, such as the almost unbelievably turgid Song of Welcome, whose chorus runs:

> Freedom's angel now's come,
> Mercy's sister now's come,
> Grim Oppression drees his doom
> Harriet Beecher Stowe's come.

and Thomas Campbell's more famous:

> One moment may with bliss repay
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> Such was the throb and mutual sob
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COBDEN-SANDERSON

The songs, given with their tunes, are also well chosen, calculated to defy the foulest weather while rowdily or lightly echoing in turn the sentiments of each member of the most diverse week-end party. It is good to have accessible the Lum Hat Wantin' the Croon, Drumdelgie, and Andro wi' his Cutty Gun; not to mention the Precentors' Rhymes, used in the past for choir practice in order to preserve the sacred songs from heedless repetition—thus:

> The high notes of Bangor tune are unco hard to raise
> And trying hard to reach them gars the lassies burst their stays.

Scotland's delightful country dances are well set forth with descriptions, diagrams, and tunes—a grand absorber of the day's remaining energy is the Dashing White Sergeant, or the Drops of Brandy. Kitchen and cellar are visited. Persons of enterprising palates should investigate the seaweed dishes and windblown fish. Wisely is it remarked that "most of the whiskies of commerce are patent-still spirit made from grain blended with a little pot-still to mitigate its flavour," and the traveller recommended to taste a "single," unblended whisky, a drink scarcely comparable with the spirits so widely and recklessly consumed.

"Non-Human Natives" is interesting, but not always precise. Although confined to a few acres in Orkney and Caithness and persistently resisting all efforts at transplanting, mention in a discussion of the rare flowers of Scotland should be made of the unique *primula scotica.* The badger in Scotland cannot be called plentiful. While to say that, apart from adders, "we have no other snakes, and no lizards," may be true, but does an injustice to the amiable slow-worm wriggling between the two classifications. After which I am not prepared to take without reserve the contention that the pine-marten and, particularly, the polecat are entirely extinct.

The sections on travelling and architecture are among the best things in the book—the latter gives an extraordinarily compact survey admirably illustrated with outline drawings. Yet for all its versatility, *The Scots Week-end* achieves shape and unity; and if there is something of the disillusioned London-Scot of the late nineteenth century about Mr. Carswell in certain of his comments, he is predominantly vigorous and entertaining.

George Scott Moncrieff

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Miss Fidler was for some time a patient in an English voluntary hospital, and, in this little book, she ventilates her grievances against the nurses, the management of the wards, the food, and the treatment of the patients generally. She admits that fine work is done by hospitals as a whole, that "they save lives innumerable," and that "without them the country would be in a very sad way." She acknowledges that in this book she shows only one side of the shield, "the other side—heavily gilded—being already so familiar to everybody that it needs no description." Naturally, therefore, to most people with first-hand experience of hospitals, the picture here presented will seem somewhat untrue and unfair. Would-be reformers are not most effective when they concentrate too exclusively on minor flaws in the working of an institution mainly beneficent. It is certainly desirable, through the influence of public opinion, to bring pressure to bear on hospital administrative bodies to get rid of their somewhat complacent conservatism, and to remove the many useless and altogether unnecessary sources of petty irritation to which patients, perhaps too uncomplainingly, have to submit. Miss Fidler's reactions are certainly not those of the majority of hospital patients; and even Dr. Malleson, who introduces the author to the reader, says in her foreword that her "experience as a hospital patient was more fortunate than Miss Fidler's." Nevertheless, it is high time that the (in its raw state) excellent hospital food was more daintily served and more skilfully cooked—that nurses were less dehumanised by overwork and petty restrictions—and that in minor ways the comfort of patients was not unduly sacrificed—as in the early morning wakening, still all too common—to the convenience of the professional staff. Still, one can only regret the somewhat grousing and querulous attitude manifest in these pages.

Harry Roberts

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for the lovely book. You couldn't have chosen anything I should have liked better." Really this is the perfect present. There are 130 plates, very good ones, and the jacket, by Rex Whistler, also is ravishing. Hogarth, Gainsborough, Zoffany, Devis, Stubbs, Patch, Ferneley, Copley, even Constable and Turner, are here represented, as well as a host of minor painters. We see the English country gentleman surrounded by his wives and his horses, his dogs, his children and his negroes, his pictures and his musical instrument or his pilasters and his fields. I think the Conversation Piece is probably the happiest English contribution to the art of painting, and this is a book you can look at again and again. Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell's text is packed with interesting comment, with occasionally a fine imaginative outburst—a description, for instance, of Stubbs in a lonely farmhouse dissecting the vast carcases of horses, is in the author's best manner. Some of the pictures illustrated belong to Captain Osbert Sitwell, others to Mr. Osbert Sitwell. The book costs a guinea, and is therefore what the genteel call " very reasonable."

I should have thought you might have ordered something yourself for your respected wife, instead of putting after her name " something good " with the " good " underlined. The most " good " book I could get was the illustrated commemorative catalogue of the Chinese Exhibition. This has 160 full-page plates representing some four hundred of the best exhibits, very fastidiously chosen. Much too good a book, you will agree, for Aunt Angela. But her taste in *objects*, as you admitted in the witness-box, is impeccable, and the bronzes and ceramics here shown are unsurpassably beautiful. The paintings are less good—the Chinese have never had many great painters or their works have not survived or they did not get sent to Burlington House. In any case, this book is magnificent. For Julia I chose the Oliver Messel *Romeo and Juliet*. The drawings he made for the M.-G.-M. film are reproduced very delicately in collotype, and some of them in colour. (Why anyone should design in colour for a monochrome film passes my understanding, but the colours are exceedingly charming.) It is amusing—or saddening—to see what hay Hollywood made of these sketches. Mr. Messel's very tasteful balcony-scene was vulgarised out of all recognition. The costumes are, many of them, stunning, and though Julia certainly won't read the Shakespeare text which makes up the body of the book, she certainly will copy one of the drawings for one of the Coronation fancy-dress affairs.

I've sent Phyllis *Vulgar Society*, which is a short life by James Laver of Tissot, with thirty admirable photographs of his unadmirable pictures. I should say myself that a taste for Tissot proved entire insensibility to visual art, were it not that Mr. Samuel Courtauld apparently owns one of these monstrosities. They are " amusing," as old numbers of the *Illustrated London News* are amusing. Tissot might be called the Frith, or better, the Augustus Egg of France. His early pictures show some knowledge of composition, but they get worse and worse and worse. In photographs the full horror of the handling is not so apparent, and the Victorian subjects have a mild period-charm. Mr. Laner oddly talks of " the modern prejudice that a picture should never, under any circumstances, tell a story." I should have supposed that many of the greatest pictures in the world, by Giotto, Fra Angelico, Botticelli, Rembrandt, Poussin, Goya, Delacroix, Monet and Picasso, told stories very effectively. The trouble with poor Tissot is not that he told stories, but that he was a very mediocre artist. Phyllis, however, will like the book. She fancies she likes pictures and, in fact, has merely a taste for the picturesque.

I don't know your godson, Barnaby; you tell me he's a young painter, and if I know anything of young painters much the best present for him would be a cheque. But I've found a book he is certain to like, *Circus Parade*. It has about 140 photographs of circus subjects, trapeze acts, clowns, Liberty horses, tigers, sea-lions, jugglers, trick-bicyclists and rope-walkers. I know that he's not exactly an admirer of Dame Laura, but he will be fascinated by these photographs. The text, by a man who worked for years in circuses, is also unusually good reading. And those of us who feel rather uneasy at the sight of performing lions may be comforted (rightly or wrongly) by his account of the Hagenbeck training technique and by his remark that a frightened animal would be too dangerous to work with. There is also an interesting assertion that wild animals live longer in circuses than in zoos. Barbette, who does one of the most skilful and best-produced acts, is not mentioned, but Con Colleano, the Wallendas, the Flying Conzellos, Charles Rivels and most of the major circus stars are here illustrated and described. There is, you once said, nothing so *photogénique* as a circus.

Just Cats I sent to your brother-in-law Raoul, because I remember his once quoting to me Baudelaire's sonnet " Les Chats," which ends:

> Leurs reins féconds sont plein d'étincelles magiques,
> Et des parcelles d'or, ainsi qu'un sable fin,
> Etoilent vaguement leurs prunelles mystiques.

Also he knows a good drawing when he sees one, just as he knows a good press. And Mr. Luard's cats are comparable with Barye's tigers—I've never seen better cats, even in the Cairo Museum.

Dicky provided a problem because he can't read, though he spent five years at a school in Eastbourne, four years in one of Our Great Public Schools, and three years at Cambridge. But 250 photographs of snow-mountains, collected under the title *Alpine Wonderland*, seemed just the book for him. It is a pity that he will be unable to enjoy Sir Claud Schuster's excellent introduction, but perhaps he'll find some Kandahar friend to read it aloud to him. The photographs are well taken and well reproduced.

Old Uncle Reuben was even more of a poser, because we have never found any subject, animate or abstract, on which we could agree. But I think he'll like the book I ordered, *Life Lines*, because I don't. It's a collection of photographs of nudes, altogether too arty for my taste. But he is so old that he'll probably think the book rather daring, as well as " so artistic."

Shaun—I beg his pardon, Séan—was easily disposed of. Mr. Thomas Mason of the Royal Irish Academy has written a most agreeable book, *The Islands of Ireland*, illustrated with 160 of his own admirable photographs. Here are some of the loveliest places in the world, and still unsmirched by the tripper. Besides Achill, the Aran Islands and the Blaskets, he describes Tory Island, Inishmurray, Inishboffin, Inishore, the Salter Island, Rathlin, and wildest perhaps of all, the Skelligs.

William, being a clergyman, has been sent *Mediaeval Styles of the English Parish Church*, which is a model of what such a book should be. The text explains very lucidly the changes in English ecclesiastical architecture as it developed from Saxon to Perpendicular, and almost for the first time full justice is done to the last, and as I think finest, flowering of English Gothic, in the

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fifteenth century. There are 180 very well selected photographs. I hope that after inwardly digesting this book William's taste in church furniture will improve, and that he will obtain a faculty for demolishing all the hideous stained glass which disfigures his parish church.

To Henry goes *Progress at Pelvis Bay*, because he is an M.P. and may be incited to try to stop the destruction of Georgian buildings. This little book is a satirical account of an imaginary but all-too-typical seaside resort. The decent Regency architecture is surrounded and eventually destroyed by the encroaching vulgarity of succeeding ages. Mr. Osbert Lancaster's drawings are tragically amusing: they show the French chateau style, the Moorish, the Olde Englyshe, and the paulo-post-Corbusier, successively turning a town into an architectural nightmare. This is a glorified Christmas-card which will score a sure-fire success with any intelligent person. (But is Henry intelligent?)

To Angus and his wife, living laborious days in the damp and windswept Falkland Islands, I've sent *English Village Homes* and *The Old Towns of England*. Each has about 130 photographs of pleasant buildings which have until now escaped destruction. The former has the more interesting text, the latter, perhaps, the more attractive illustrations. Public opinion is fairly alive to the naughtiness of destroying picturesque Gothic, Elizabethan or Jacobean buildings. What we now need is a new Ruskin who will convince people that our later architecture is an even greater glory. Official and non-official bodies alike still care more for a half-timbered cottage than the noblest Georgian mansion.

I have spent five-and-six more than your cheque, and a postal order for this sum will be appreciated by your diligent, much-put-upon, and all-too-trustworthy nephew,

ROGER MARVELL

AGAIN THE PROBLEM OF TIME

Life Here and Now. By ARTHUR PONSONBY. *Allen and Unwin.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Resisting the temptations to write his reminiscences, Lord Ponsonby has chosen instead to tackle the problem of time. His book falls into two parts: the first consists of an examination of what he calls the sense of duration, the second of reflections on immortality, the growth of population, education, the right conduct of life, and a host of other subjects which are suggested by the conclusions of the first part.

The distinctive claim of the first part of the book may be stated in Lord Ponsonby's own words: "It will be claimed in these pages that we have a sense, as distinctive as any of our five accepted senses, for sometimes consciously and sometimes automatically estimating the length of all perceptual time intervals. This may be called our Sense of Duration; and it is in perpetual operation." This apparatus which we possess for measuring time is, Lord Ponsonby is careful to point out, other than what it measures, and he maintains that this distinction between the sense of duration and what it measures is valid, whether time itself is, as some philosophers have held, subjective, that is to say, a form or characteristic of the human understanding which we impose upon everything that we experience, or objective, that is to say, a real factor in the universe whose nature and rate of flow is independent of our sense of it.

The maintenance of this distinction is an essential condition of any clear discussion of the nature of time. Yet having in due form announced it, I am far from convinced that Lord Ponsonby does in fact maintain it.

What, for example, are we to make of such passages as the following?

> "Our sense of the passing intervals as we live through them, our sense of their duration, not only becomes the measure on which our estimates of our past and future are based, but is actually Time itself so far as human understanding is concerned." The implication, an implication which the ensuing discussion fully sustains, is that the sense of duration is the only aspect of time that concerns us, that, indeed, it is "actually Time itself so far as human understanding is concerned."

It is on this basis that Lord Ponsonby proceeds to sketch a philosophy of life. Since the sense of duration is the only aspect of time that concerns us, we should see to it that we make the most of the small spans of time that it includes. Hence arises a philosophy of the "make the most of the passing moment" variety: not the fruits of experience, but experience itself is the end of life, and we should strive to burn always with that hard gem-like flame recommended by Walter Pater, who conceived the problem of good living as how "to pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?" Lord Ponsonby agrees with Pater:

> The next quarter of an hour is of immeasurably greater importance than eternal life, and the conduct and content of that quarter of an hour is not helped but hindered by thoughts and hopes of immortality. *Now* is not a point of time. It is all Time for us, or, more comprehensibly, the only part of Time in which action is possible.

It is difficult to dissent from Lord Ponsonby's conclusion. The secret of being happy is, it is fairly obvious, not to have leisure enough to wonder whether you are miserable or not; and if unremitting action is, as Lord Ponsonby suggests—and I agree—the recipe for happiness, his own life must have been an exceptionally happy one. He has moved in every stratum of society; he has sat in both Houses of Parliament; he has been a doughty fighter for causes; he has sought in season and out to reform the world; he has unearthed and edited diaries; and he has done a noble work for peace. It is in the interstices of the multitudinous activities that have constituted his life that he has put together this book of reflections upon Time, "making notes in bed, in his bath, at a concert, in the street and on the country road, in trains and buses, and even during Parliamentary debates."

Lord Ponsonby, inevitably, fails to do any sort of justice to the philosophy of quietism. It may after all be the case that the best way to deal with the passage of time is not to make the most out of every moment, but to make nothing out of any moment. What, for example, would Lord Ponsonby have to say of the wisdom expressed in the following passage from a Chinese expositor of Taoism?

> If a man desires too much or overworks, and does not rest in time, the result will be the illness of Time. If he cannot control his passion he will get older and older, and the result will be the illness of age. . . The first step for a man who becomes a candidate for immortality is to keep life easy and the body young.

In this matter my sympathies are with Lord Ponsonby and not with Taoism. Nevertheless, I am totally unable to see that his conclusions follow from his premises. His account of the sense

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But can we deal with clock time in this cavalier manner? The experience of the dentist's drill is lamentably long; of sexual gratification, lamentably short. Why, then, if our *sense* of duration is what really matters—and is all that really matters—why, if clock time is a mere convention, do we not reverse the roles? Why, indeed, unless it be that our sense of duration is *not* "Time itself so far as human consciousness is concerned." If, indeed, it were, how account for missed trains, the eternity of the drill, and the transience of love.

What account, again, are we to give of those people whose sense of duration is highly developed, in that they can guess the time to a minute without looking at their watches? May we not say that their sense of duration conforms better than that of most people to the actual flow of time which, far from being a matter of conventional measurement, constitutes the unalterable framework within which our lives are cast. An analogy may serve to indicate the difficulty which I find in Lord Ponsonby's theory. Let us suppose that a number of observers are asked to guess the temperature of a room: their guesses will all be different and the differences will be determined by conditions prevailing in the bodies of the observers. A man who has come out of a blizzard will think the temperature higher than a man who has come out of a furnace. Nevertheless, there *is* an objective temperature which the thermometer measures, and some of the guesses will, accordingly, be more accurate than others. Lord Ponsonby's view suggests that there are only *temperature estimates*, and that to some extent we can determine these as we please, while the temperature itself is relegated to a comparatively unimportant background. That we should be able to make time as we please seems to me to be one of the chief delights of Heaven, and I conclude that it is only in Heaven that Lord Ponsonby's philosophy of time is true.

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M. Demaitre offers much new material punctuated with pleasant Gallic wit. There are several amusing yarns, and, though one detects a slight veering to the style of the Popular Press, it is the only one of the four books reviewed to live up to the claim on its dust cover. Besides painting a vivid picture of the unexplored regions of New Guinea, it gives a first-rate account of the work of John Bull, and especially of the patrol officers' many-sided activities:

> We carry the torch of civilisation into the jungle. Good. But when our boys collapse we have also to carry packing cases. And that is not pleasant.

Cows travel by plane; dogs are suckled by women; and patrol officers (three of whom accompanied the author during his travels) sometimes write letters of the sort quoted and always are well up in "pidgin." No one could find fault with the wonderfully fair thumb-nail study of New Guinea since British occupation; nothing could be better for future administration than kindly foreign criticism. Homage is paid to the late C. J. Levien, the young Australian airman whose pioneer aerial transport raised gold production to a high level. But M. Demaitre's greatest merit is his fine psychological insight into the Kanaka's often poignant life, admirably conveyed in a short biography of a Kanaka native. His most valuable chapters are those in which he examines Racial Secrets, native character and customs and tries to show why native life is often Spanish cheap. Whites apparently smell and make appalling stew, yet the frontispiece is a head-hunter of the Sepik region carrying his bleeding trophy—probably revolting but a pretty keepsake.

This translation, *New Guinea Gold*, of *L'Enfer du Pacifique*, by Mr. Beaumont seems excellent, and there are many nice-sounding words eminently suitable for Mr. Eugene Jolas and other fourth-dimensional transitionists. The twenty-four illustrations and useful end-maps are characteristic of M. Demaitre's seriousness, and enhance a very interesting first-hand presentation of "anthropophagy."

Mr. Bednall, who is a journalist, frequently comes near to being a poet in *Strange Sea Road*, the account of the voyage of the Swedish windjammer, *C. B. Pedersen*, in June, 1935, from Melbourne to Goteborg. How rare to find a travel-writer with the power of understanding seascape, a feeling for the texture of words and a turn of phrase reasonably free from clichés. Intending to sail by way of Cape Horn, the *Pedersen* is driven by bad seas to make a western passage—a dangerous route out of favour at Lloyds—through coral and Torres Strait. Mr. Bednall soberly records their track—Bligh's open-boat trail through Arafur and Timor Sea, but unfortunately omits a map. He avoids Munchausen treacle; he has a glint of humour but he would never make a psycho-analyst. (Monsieur Demaitre would.) Bringing the Swedish crew to life, he can't survey his seven fellow-passengers with detachment. If he intended to show the psychological effects of five months spent in close proximity, he should have got under their skin. Nevertheless, it remains extremely readable and the photographs are really lovely.

Turning from Mr. Bednall to Capt. Howard Hartman is like finding oneself in a smoky West End cinema after looking across at Snowdon from a windswept Wirral heath. The *Seas Were Mine* is up to 1905; the blurb and the Howard Costerish photo-

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For grown-ups

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SHIPS AND WOMEN	by *Bill Adams.* A grand autobiography. "He is nearer to me than any other writer." *Alain Gerbault.* "Unceasingly exciting, vivid and picturesque." *Joseph Sell.* "Might serve as a model in autobiographies." *Yachting World.* "Splendid stuff." *Peter Belloc.* "A book in a hundred." *Daily Independent.* 8/6
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For children

RUNAWAY MIKE	by *Eleanor Helme.* The companion book to last year's great success *Mayfly.* All young people who are fond of riding will love this tale of a boy and his pony and his dog on Exmoor. With illustrations by *T. Ivester Lloyd.* "A little classic." *Gloucestershire Echo.* 7/6

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graph of the forthright old-salt lead one to expect an author more artistically gifted than Lord Berners. Instead, amateur clumsiness, a curiously rigid Fascist-mind and a childish immodesty which, despite the editing of Mr. Hellman, comes between incident and reader. His reminiscences of Conrad are good. The description of him at 31, job-hunting at the Board of Trade, Tower Hill:

> I was surprised to learn that he had made application to Cpt. Morley for the post of second-mate. Quartermaster was my guess. I thought you were a frog-eater.

Poor Capt. Hartman! Then steak and kidney and a Bass together; a Pimlico music-hall later that night. Conrad next intrudes in a Singapore hospital, croons Polish melodies on the way to witness a café-drama and get his first glimpse of Tuan Jim Lungard, whom interfering suitors called a "mincing lollypop"—i.e., "public-school":

> Ah! Oh! Really? Really? I'll severely chastise you.

One realises more and more what an unenterprising and rather wooden personality is here, muttering things about the Great Samoan Hurricane, a grim Cecil Rhodes prank with a mamba, a high-spirited Lt. Winston Churchill, and a more aesthetic figure:

> A writer chap Stevenson wanted to board us. Tall and gaunt, dressed in white duck—a flowing black tie fluttered from his wide turned-down collar.

Fanny Osborne often broke plates over the Hawaiian king's hospitality. Bottles of champagne inspired lyrics to island princesses. Refreshing to find that the South Seas in those happy days, like Russia to-day, knew how to shower royal favours on "an author of distinction."

Let us be frank, *The Scourge of the Desert* is a good thriller in the tradition of P. C. Wren. Agents of the *Espionage Central* are "terribly" tough; bandits, the soulless Sahara, a sweetie's crush on the author, Kipling friendships, death from sand and phoenix and devilish hell-hounds, coincidences and black Arab plots, were, I daresay, the make-up of his dozen previous books: Operator 1384 must write when "off-duty." They are all *true*. There is even that final sentence, "East is East and West is West." Monsieur Operator never philosophises, and misses clumsy pitfalls. Is it because of his other books? Throughout, the violet action hastens on, plunges splendidly into intrigue and counter-plot with French Foreign Legion licence. The descriptions of fighting methods are most adequate; no nasty sex; no false gold. In fact, an excellent and vital book for the adolescent.

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THE TRAGIC MUSE

Mrs. Siddons: Tragic Actress. By YVONNE FFRENCH. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 10s. 6d.

When we read the life of a great actor or singer of the past we expect something in addition to the qualities desirable in all biographies—accuracy, readability and a lifelike portrait. We are anxious to learn, as precisely as may be, what were the characteristics, the essential flavour, of an art which made its exponent the sensation of his age. The quiddity of acting can only be conveyed—imperfectly enough at the best—by liberal quotation and condensation from the opinions of contemporary connoisseurs; and the casual details they record are often more evocative than many pages of glowing tribute. One of the virtues of Miss ffrench's admirable life of Mrs. Siddons is that she gives us such details: what clothes Mrs. Siddons wore in her various rôles; which lines and phrases she underlined in her copy of *Venice Preserved*; what sense, as Lady Macbeth, she gave to the famous exclamation "We fail!"; at what point in the sleep-walking scene she set down the candle; and so on. The whole chapter on her Lady Macbeth is of great interest to all lovers of acting—

> She walked on to the stage reading the letter so skilfully and reflectively that the audience were immediately under the impression that it was a continuation of that which had been begun elsewhere. "They met me in the day of success," she was reading, " . . . They made themselves "—and here she paused—" air."

She played the banquet scene (and these are her own words)

> dying with fear, yet assuming the utmost composure . . . entertaining her wondering guests with frightful smiles, with over-acted attention, and with fitful graciousness; painfully, yet incessantly, labouring to divert their attention from her husband.

Her conduct of the climax when, the limit of her endurance reached, she dismisses the lords, we are able, thanks to the annotated text of a spectator, to watch from the front of the house: "Here," notes Professor Bell,

> "she descends in great eagerness; voice almost choked with anxiety to prevent their questioning, alarm, hurry, rapid and convulsive as if afraid Macbeth should tell of the murder of Duncan."

In the sleep-walking scene

> she moved freely about in the obscurity, miraculously avoiding obstacles, sometimes stepping backwards as if feeling for the candle, yet bound in the depths of sleep. . . .

"What! Will these hands ne'er *be clean?*" was spoken "peevishly"; the adverb, like a telescope turned upon the face of the moon, suddenly focuses our imaginative picture of that distant, awe-inspiring occasion. Having already gleaned some notion of the depth and richness of her voice, and with a score of portraits in our mind's eye, we are almost tempted to fancy ourselves actually in the audience at a Siddons first night.

And yet could we, sedate twentieth-century theatre-goers, be indeed whirled back a century and a half, we should probably experience as much exasperation as tragic horror. Goaded to fury by the rustle of Shaftesbury Avenue chocolate paper, what should we have made of the uproar that filled old Drury Lane from roof to floor? Only the respectable, middle-class pit behaved well. The gallery upon the slightest excuse began to sing, whistle, hoot, hiss and stamp; and the boxes were little better, what with constant late arrivals, loud voices calling for "Mrs. So-and-So's places," and gentlemen perched on the ledges and engaged in animated conversation with their neighbours. The wonder is that even the most brilliant talent could make itself felt in a theatre in which it was often "quite impossible to hear what was being said upon the stage beyond the seventh row" of the pit. But public interest in the art of acting, feeble to-day, was then so intense and widespread that, the moment true genius appeared on the stage, clamour was silenced and the performance followed so closely as to make possible a criticism, appraisal and comparison more balanced and thorough-going than anything our own times can provide.

Miss ffrench has been uncommonly successful in welding into a single narrative the strepitous theatrical background, the professional career, and the private life of an actress, whose respecta-

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bility, at a time when no one thought of associating such a phenomenon with the stage, seemed in its solidity a premonition of the Victorian era. To have remained faithful through a lifetime of universal adulation to that tiresome nonentity Mr. Siddons was certainly an achievement. But Mrs. Siddons was not perhaps a very interesting person off the stage. A monument of loyalty and good sense, with little capacity for society or conversation, she moved through life in the massive style that made her so unsuitable a Rosalind: a rôle in which, indeed, her respectability even got in the way of her stage-craft. " Her matronly hesitations about dressing up as a boy resulted in a most astonishing compromise. She wore hussar boots surmounted by what seemed to be a gardener's apron in front, and a petticoat behind, thus giving herself the most equivocal appearance." But it was not only the absurd costume which defeated her attempts at archness, for " how," enquired Charles Young, " could such a countenance be arch ? " Tragic solemnity at all times was, it appears, a characteristic of the Kemble family: Miss ffrench sets beside the familiar picture of Mrs. Siddons terrifying a shopkeeper with the words: " Will it wash ? " a pleasant glimpse of her brother buying an umbrella: " This likes me well! The cost? The cost ? "

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

AGAINST UNREASON

In the Shadow of To-morrow. By Prof. J. HUIZINGA. (Trans. from the Dutch by J. H. HUIZINGA.) *Heinemann.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

This book is a sober diagnosis of the evils of worshipping Life and renouncing restraining principles. It is therefore in the vanguard of what may prove a new reaction. But while Professor Huizinga rightly recognises the value of past ideals, it is doubtful whether he has enough sympathy with those movements that attack idealism when it has become hypocritical or mechanical. It is true that such movements, as is well seen in D. H. Lawrence, contain the seeds of their own degeneration if they seek to substitute mere impulse or Life for the metaphysical ideals of religion proper. Yet they are essentially a part of that simultaneous birth and death process by which the equilibrium of society is maintained. We were surprised when Lawrence's final philosphy was found to be so close to the power ideas of Fascism, yet Professor Huizinga, though he never mentions Lawrence, could have foretold it, and he makes us suspicious of the social adequacy of a good many other philosophies which rely upon Life Forces, Elan Vital, Sex, Blood, Nature, or even Reason. At the same time it is wrong to regard these philosophies, or at least, some of them, as backsliding; we feel that Professor Huizinga should have regarded them more as a part of the growth of a new idealism, than as retrogressive forces.

This " diagnosis of our spiritual distemper " begins by reminding us that our apprehensions of doom are not " shapeless anxieties which beset us in the small hours of the night," but have objective validity and in some respects have no parallel in history. The essential elements of the stable society are then examined and we are shown in what respects our own societies have ignored or abused them. It is argued that without a culture based upon equilibrium and striving, a high critical spirit, intellectual principle and moral standards, civilisation declines into puerilism, superstition, hero-worship and debased artistic style. It is not difficult to show that this decline has taken place in Western Europe, although in the democracies there is still time to regenerate ourselves if we admit our mistakes. We ought to recognise, for example, that even war is an exaggeration of a truth, for social balance requires a certain conflict of contrasts; war, by destroying opposition, prevents this " healthy " battle. It is when we rely upon our instincts without trying to understand them that we brutalise necessity. Again, what is Fascism but the expression by the mass of what Surrealism is to the few? Both despise reason. When Goering said, " Intellectual activity has been the curse of our people," he was not speaking very differently from the critic quoted by Professor Huizinga who wrote of Chagall's art, " It is problematic only for those who cannot do without the aesthetic problem or for those who must think something about what they see, while this art eliminates thought." Highbrow and lowbrow alike are disavowing the intellectual principle and surrendering to their own kind of unreason; their enmity is just a matter of temperament.

Disaster proves that Professor Huizinga is right when he says that we cannot abandon the eternal truths. " For what replaces these high principles of action is then nothing but a conglomeration of conflicting desires. The factors linking the cultural aims of our time together can only be found in the series, prosperity, power and security, all ideals which are more apt to divide than unite, and all springing directly from natural instincts, untouched by the spirit. . . . Culture must have its aims in the metaphysical or it will cease to be culture "—the natural contrasts of our temperaments will become internecine conflicts and our social reforms will only increase our powers of spreading evil.

This is so evident that we wonder why intelligent men ever revolted against principle and authority. Was it no more than the selfishness of the natural man? Surely it was because the nineteenth century forced a mature idealism upon youth and turned us into mechanical saints or degenerates. If people do not feel the emotion of the ideal, they will not obey it for long; or if they do, they obey it from the wrong motives. The ideal life should be the most, not the least, pleasant. If modern Europe were not exasperated by economic injustices it might fairly hope that idealism would be re-born from its experiments with Life. It is the serious weakness of this book that it does not sufficiently acknowledge the value of the Socialist political movements as a means to attaining the social conditions necessary to help the spirit grow into maturity; it is its strength to remind us that " it is no better than shallow thinking to assume that collectivism excludes egotism." In the end we are always forced back to those eternal truths which are " above the stream of evolution and change."

ROBERT WALLER

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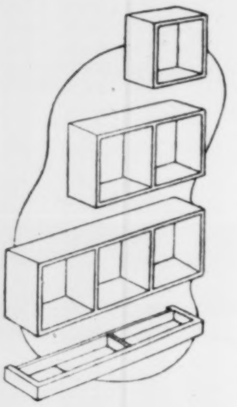

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sense of effective reality." Here is the living central institution of our political system in its effective daily operation. It is something akin to a triumph to have put into plain words the way in which it functions. This book goes on the shelf where the student of our Constitution keeps only some half-dozen volumes. It belongs with Bagehot, with Maitland, with Lowell, with Redlich. They will be proud to welcome it in that select company.

Dr. Jennings' is not an historical treatise save in the sense that it gathers together our knowledge of Cabinet processes since the time of Peel. Essentially, it is, so to say, a physiology of the Cabinet in operation. It starts with the choice of a Prime Minister, discusses how a Cabinet is formed, explains how the departments work (with a specially valuable chapter on Treasury control), and deals brilliantly and suggestively with the Cabinet and its relations to the Crown and Parliament. The whole treatment is of fascinating interest; and the picture is drawn so that the reader constantly has the living reality before his eyes.

Dr. Jennings refrains from any evaluation of the process he describes. He is content to paint a scrupulously careful picture and to leave the reader to draw his own inferences. The canvas is so vast that it is difficult to draw attention to more than a few of the outstanding points he raises. One wonders how the Cabinet worked as well as it did in the days before the existence of the Secretariat. It is a little disturbing to find how pervasive is the influence of the Treasury and how predominant (especially in relation to the Budget) is the influence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Obviously, too, a great deal depends upon the individuality of particular Cabinets and particular Prime Ministers; one is tempted to say that nowhere in the British Constitution does temperament count for so much in administration. Dr. Jennings' picture, I think, leaves one with the impression that the usual picture of an overstrained and overwhelmed Cabinet is overdrawn. If Cabinet Ministers are in that condition, it seems less the work of the Cabinet itself that presses than other duties which arise from the ministerial position, though the burden of Cabinet committees has obviously become great upon a small number of Ministers. There emerges, too, the decisive importance of the dozen outstanding civil servants; their power to shape the course of events, where they have drive and energy and a sense of the direction in which they want to go, is pivotal to the working of the machine.

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Dr. Jennings' chapters on the monarchy contain a great mass of valuable information nowhere else so usefully available. Judgment upon its significance will obviously be very varied according to the premisses from which one starts. From his own account it is clear that while much of the King's actual power has become obsolete the residuum is still important enough to be decisive in any period of crisis. His power to choose a Prime Minister on his own initiative appears, on Dr. Jennings' account, to be a living thing. The power to refuse a dissolution is pretty automatic. The authority of the unofficial advisers, and of the Court circle, is pervasive and may well be alarming. Let it be frankly said that the part played in the past by men like Lord Esher (he is symbolical of a race not yet extinct) is highly undesirable in a constitutional system. And there are activities performed by men like Archbishop Davidson which do not make over-pleasant reading. We have not yet solved the problem (perhaps it is insoluble) of building about the King an environment which will prevent the main impact of his influence being either invariably to the Right or, alternatively, being towards compromises which complicate rather than assist the problems with which they are concerned. Dr. Jennings strives to show that, in the long run, prerogative is subordinate to public opinion. That is, I suspect, too simple a view for the good reason that, on the problems it confronts, there is rarely a single public opinion, and a highly selective process in the channels through which what of public opinion there is reaches the person of the Monarch. The evidence for this is overwhelming in the case of Queen Victoria; there is sufficient to show that it is true in at least a considerable degree of her two successors. The unofficial advisers in both instances did not make the task of progressive Governments any easier.

But argument would take us too far afield. It is enough here to signalise a book that, for many years to come, will be an indispensable tool of every student of our institutions. It is difficult to know whether to admire more the diligence that has gone to its compilation or the art that has gone to its construction. To write a book of four hundred pages which is of continuous excitement and interest upon such a theme was no easy task. Dr. Jennings has accomplished it superbly. He has given us the foundation upon which, one day, I hope he will build that treatise in succession to Bagehot now so long overdue. For by this volume he has indicated himself as uniquely fitted for that great task.

HAROLD J. LASKI

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Patterns of Economic Activity. By ARTHUR RADFORD, *Routledge.* 12*s*. 6*d*.

The material of economic science, the control of physical, financial, and psychical resources, property rights, commercial possibilities, business administration, prices, values, satisfactions. Mr. Radford here envisages and presents in terms of structure or "patterns." In productive processes these patterns are seen in combinations of the different factors in proper proportions, so as to yield the largest outputs. The mind or intention of the producer, or, in modern business, the *entrepreneur*, is the direct maker of these patterns, for he commands the application of the money needed in the several processes. But prior to him and conditioning his every action is the technician who deals with the available material resources, including labour, and sets them in due proportions to their tasks. There is also "the psychical aspect" of these productive processes. And here care must be taken to exclude all notions of "right" and "wrong," of ultimate purposes and of an immeasurable thing called "social welfare." Awareness is the keynote to economic psychics. "Within this field of awareness he (the administrator) moves himself and allocates the resources over which he has control; in other words, he takes the most attractive route and makes the most attractive pattern" (p. 234). What makes a pattern attractive is apparently the achievement of, or approach towards, an equilibrium in the administration of resources. On the psychical side such an equilibrium ranks as satisfaction. But modern industry is never static, not a stable but a moving equilibrium is its driving force, such movement being due partly to the discovery of new resources or technique, partly to changes in taste operative on the market through demand.

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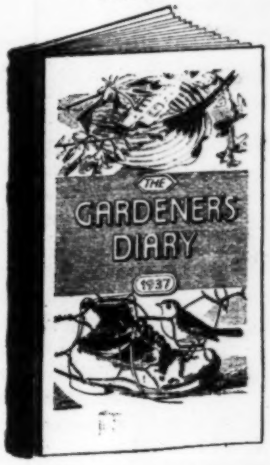

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consumption. The home, or standard of living, is such a pattern, changing with the constitution, health and other conditions of the family, and reacting on production through the market. But the individual is the only measurable unit of satisfaction. Social satisfaction, in the strict sense of the word, cannot be measured, for one man's meat may be another's poison, and no two persons have identical valuations of any form of matter. "Poverty and superabundance are maladjustments" (p. 39). But we have no means of knowing whether a more equal distribution of income would increase the aggregate of satisfaction. The only "economic ill" that is certain and definite is one that makes impossible the full pursuit of the principle of economy. Such an "ill" would be price-fixing by the State within the operation of the current economic system. Rational activity on the part of producer-consumers is the necessary assumption of economy. We cannot condemn any of the so-called wastes of excessive competition, or monopoly and restriction, or exploitation, without showing that they are incompatible with equilibrium. Such judgments may seem to range the writer on the side of social conservatism. But that is not his real position. For he does not sever economic progress from political changes in property and other legal institutions. The State may be utilised in various ways to work towards a general equilibrium of contentment and satisfaction. "The *raison d'être* of education, health, public assistance, and all the social services, is to be found in the rational attempt to establish a social equilibrium, to establish a scheme of freedoms and unfreedoms in the community" (p. 345).

It is impossible here to give any intelligible account of the skilled elaboration which Mr. Radford brings to bear in his account of the pattern-making process, accompanied by the formidable diagrams illustrating the diverse combinations and flows of the operative forces in production. There is no doubt that his book is a valuable asset to readers who seek to grasp the part played in economic science by the principle of substitution, the laws of supply and demand, and their respective elasticities. One doubt, however, will linger in the mind of some of his readers. Does he adequately realise that a "pattern" is a qualitative structure, not a mere coming together of separate parts, but an organic unity, the character of which determines the number and arrangement of the units of the several productive or consumptive factors? Sometimes he seems to approach this comprehension and then to lose sight of it as he is immersed in his mathematical calculations. The "organic" character of a pattern may be expressed, as he sometimes does, in the term "picture." But the consumptive satisfaction which is the end of all these economic operations has a direct concrete basis in the related organic needs of the animal man, and even when we get to the higher and more "artificial" tastes and wants we do not escape the organic pressures which are qualitative in the individual as in the community, and which put a narrow limit to the play of a purely quantitative economics.

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Everyman's England. By VICTOR CANNING. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Through Darkest Pondelayo. By SERENA LIVINGSTONE-STANLEY. *Chatto and Windus.* 6*s.*

The authors of the first two books on this list are a soldier and a rubber planter. If an author were to attempt to muscle in on either of their professions his efforts would be greeted with contempt, and he would be judged, not by the standards he set himself, but by those of established professionals in the sphere he had invaded. Authorship, however, is a different matter: its raw materials are common property and nobody is deterred from writing a book by lack of literary technique. As a result the realm of literature, like pre-revolutionary France, is divided into three estates. The first is composed of those who devote their lives to studying its technique and who become professionals: unlike the social first estate they are accorded least privilege, for they are judged by the highest standards. The second, composed of amateurs, is treated more kindly: the criteria cease to be literary and become documentary. The third estate is journalism.

Messrs. Macdonald and Székely are second estaters, and ease of self-expression is more important in their books than grace of style, for to them writing is merely a means of conveying experience, whereas to the professional author writing is the experience. When I say, therefore, that *Tropic Fever* gives a remarkably vivid picture of life on the plantations of Sumatra, that it contains vigorous and moving descriptions of the demoralising effect of the tropical sun on Europeans, and conveys the atmosphere of the concentration camp in which resigned coolies worked not so many years ago, it will be understood that I am merely assigning Ladislao Székely a high place in the ranks of the second estate and am not announcing the arrival of a Conrad from Hungary. Apart from its title, the chief fault in *Tropic Fever* is that the author cannot decide whether he is writing autobiography or fiction. But the background may be taken as genuine, and the reader should remember that, although the personal relationships between managers of rubber estates and their indented labour have changed considerably, economic relationships remain the same. Before condemning Dutch brutality he should ask himself what conditions are like in British Malaya.

The author of *Euphrates Exile* was an intelligence officer in Iraq during the last days of the mandate. But he was out of the ordinary run of official in imperial or near-imperial service and did not automatically subscribe to the conventions of the white-man's-burden school of thought. One of the most cherished of these conventions is to speak no harm of those heroic mem-sahibs whose lot it is to endure a life of excessive ease and leisure, waited on by innumerable boys and doomed by their lack of mental energy and imagination to speed the monotonous intervals between periods of leave in orgies of bridge and gossip. Mr. Macdonald shows what a cad he is by judging them on their behaviour and referring to "one of those women whose skin has been baked and whose bowels have been frozen by a too long sojourn in India." Two other conventions he rudely shatters are that an intelligence officer should keep his intelligence for use in his job and that an official should keep a sense of humour out of his. The result is an extremely lively and penetrating account of his experiences in the delicate rôle of link between mandatory and mandatee. Whether he is dealing with people, places or policies,

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A COLONIAL RETROSPECT

Jamaica—the Blessed Island. By the Right Hon. Lord Olivier. *Faber and Faber.* 21s.

Lord Olivier writes on Jamaica with unrivalled authority, but, what is almost better, this book is a labour of love. His disinterested enthusiasm will carry those who, approaching with him, get their first impression of the Blessed Island from off St. Thomas, with the rising sun lighting up the Blue Mountains; it will soothe any who suffer under the " Johnsonian or Gibbonian " shafts he hurls in characteristic fashion as he surveys the scene from the Olympian height of his beautiful old home at Fort George.

The central theme is the emergence to modest well-being in the course of a century of an uprooted African people who had suffered from " all the vices and repressions which slavery breeds." The book makes no claim to be a History. The research still required is expressly left to " painstaking students "—Lord Olivier being content to quote, rather too extensively, what in secondary authorities may serve to illustrate his thesis. His own faith, it is well known, is in the free peasant, or " small settler " ; the active encouragement the peasant policy enjoys to-day is in large part by his example. At times his judgment of the merits of earlier Governors, even of some with considerable administrative work to their credit, is governed too exclusively by the " perspicacity " they showed, or lacked, in putting their reliance on the small man.

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Mercilessly, Lord Olivier shows how little, for a generation and more after 1834, progress was furthered by Government action. The " positive " work of the Emancipationists stopped short. The spirit of Mercantilism lived on, almost unaffected by the repeal of the Navigation Acts. The masses of the people were only " a potential ' labour power ' that could not be induced or compelled to materialise itself as a reliable estate ' labour supply.' . . . Nothing was attempted for their health, their agriculture or their education. . . . Their affairs did not enter into the political record." It was in spite of neglect that the free peasantry slowly emerged; and it is of disquieting significance that official faith in the sufficiency of " plantocracy " was shaken only by violence—the mild explosion, in 1865, known as the Jamaica Rebellion.

Lord Olivier demonstrates conclusively (what some of us had taken on trust) that Africans prefer independence to wage labour, and that they have capacity for independent economic activity. I myself got into trouble with him lately for insufficiently appreciating peasant settlement as a panacea. But on his own evidence—if early settlements in Jamaica, like contemporary experiments in Cape Colony, lost their first prosperity, the decline was due partly to official apathy, but partly to the inherent difficulties of peasant agriculture and of land tenure. These persist; and even if very imperfect statistics justify a pronouncement that a majority or " plurality " of the people of Jamaica to-day have some small " stake in the land," a great many even of these obviously live in miserable conditions, far from independence. It is surprising to find Lord Olivier encouraging British opinion in its besetting sin of complacency, when he might have echoed a great Imperialist, " So much to do, so little done ! "

He is perhaps more original in the emphasis he lays on the importance of the internal market in these small colonies. His words should be weighed by African administrators who are apt to give all their energy to the development of an export trade, while neglecting their wards' tragic under-consumption. He blurs this lesson by a strange tilt at " Development " (*sic*), coming perilously near pressing the merits of internal self-dependence to the point of advocating autarchy for little Jamaica.

The book is thus provocative. It will stand as a mature Report by an experienced and sympathetic administrator on the essential problems of Jamaica. Yet it is not up to date on the fortunes of co-operation in the banana trade, and it loses by its concentration on one island which has, as it truly insists, exceptional advantages. At least one comparison is unfortunate. Barbados has a crowded population, nearly falling off its coral edges. But its schools and its school attendance are better than in Jamaica. There may be warrant for describing its people as " far less prosperous," but none, happily, for thinking them less " civilised."

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possessions and possessed of all the solid virtues of the petty bourgeois combined with the "Samurai spirit." "For the toiling population," he writes, "the Emperor is a permanent guarantee that they will never be exploited for the benefit of private capitalist concerns." Substitute Hitler for Emperor and could any Nazi do better? Moreover, Mr. Nohara would have his readers believe that the Japanese plutocrats, imbued with a patriotism unheard of elsewhere, "will when the hour comes place their estates and revenues at the Emperor's disposal" and allow a so-called "Imperial Socialism" to be established.

After Mr. Nohara it is almost a relief to turn to *The March of Japan* which, advertised as appearing simultaneously in fourteen countries, ladles out the pro-Japanese propaganda with a dessert-spoon, not with a trowel. Moreover, there are some few new things in this book such as the account of Japan's food laboratories, where Dr. Saiki has worked out the calory value of every conceivable foodstuff, broadcasts menus for three meals a day at a total cost of 2½*d.* and makes experiments concerning the edible properties of snowdrops, crushed animal bones and a number of other things never before eaten by man. There is also a first-hand description of the hairy Ainu (how lucky that someone has discovered that at least the despised aborigines of the Japanese Islands are Aryans !), and an account of the Girls' Opera where even stars receive only pin money and live in the Company dormitory where lights are put out and the doors bolted at 9.30 p.m. For the rest, Mr. Lajtha's book is mainly a repetition, though in lively style, of the usual Japanese myths about themselves. Most men who are neither Socialists nor Liberals are attracted by Japan's civilisation for men. As Mr. Lajtha himself says, Japanese men don't need to bother about their appearance because it is for the women to please them, and he obviously enjoyed being fed, undressed and put to bed by the maid at his hotel. In a chapter on the "Heroines of the Yoshiwara" he extols "the martyrs" in the brothels for "serving not only their parents and the house they work for but also Japan," and thinks Japan right not to reform the system of slavery in the brothels "at a time when she is struggling for predominance in Asia."

The Far East Comes Nearer is also in the journalistic vein, though a more serious and solid work than Mr. Lajtha's. The author's bias in favour of Japan is obvious. If Mr. Tiltman could for a moment cease to regard the Japanese as "the one progressive nation in the Far-Eastern area" because they take baths and have battleships, he might begin to look beneath the veneer of civilisation in Japan to the ugly reality beneath and no longer accept as gospel all the boasts the Japanese make about themselves. His recurring refrain is that: "In cities, railways, roads, justice, education, literature, industrial strength, armaments, sport or culture . . . modern Japan is fit to rank beside Britain herself. If a high judicial standard—drainage, clear water and soap—are constituents of civilisation then there can be no question that all Asia would benefit from Japanese rule or the spread of Japanese influence." Yet in actual fact even Tokyo has no drainage system and it is strange that Mr. Tiltman failed to smell, if not to see, the carts which carry Japan's "night soil" across the city. Japan has only a few roads which are not merely dirt tracks, she has no *Habeas Corpus* and anyone can be held in the police cells for as long as the police need to extort confessions, by torture. As regards industrial strength, she has only two million workers in factories, and only 20 per cent. of these are in heavy industry. Mr. Tiltman believes that famines have been "stamped out" in Japan, yet whilst he was sitting "at the centre table at the Imperial Hotel in February, 1936," a famine was raging in N.E. Japan. *The Far East Comes Nearer* shows an astonishing ignorance of Japanese social and economic conditions, but gives an interesting account of political events in the Far East since 1931. It is comforting to find that, although the author's general conclusion seems to be that Japan's claim to the overlordship of Asia is justified by her high "civilising" mission, he is also of the opinion that if she provokes a Russo-Japanese war she will "almost certainly bite the dust."

Far East in Ferment is the only book on this list which is at once original, well-informed and analytical. Mr. Stein really knows Japan and is particularly interesting when writing concerning the family system and education. His examples of schoolboys' essays are most illuminating. The following are typical extracts showing what is actually in the minds of the young as against the medieval rubbish and extreme chauvinism which the authorities seek to instil.

> Napoleon is not a hero because he himself is but a great conqueror —of nothing. I am sorry I cannot find a hero in our long history.

> The Western people are of individualism and love, liberty and equality, especially the American. On the contrary, Japan is of class system, and even if they are overwhelmed by upper class, they can bear. . . . The Japanese women are gentle, mild, obedient but miserable. . . . They sacrifice themselves for their husbands. . . . The Western women desert their husbands as easily as they do their old stockings.

Mr. Stein says:

> There is a danger of effeminacy, pessimism and blank scepticism among the best educated generation of the country which may, once more, develop into that positive kind of " dangerous thought " which is connected with Marxism. . . . A good part of the boys during their military manoeuvres at the foot of Mt. Fuji are said to be much more interested in the ever-changing beauties of that cloud-surrounded mountain than in their military exercises.

So exhausting is the effort to learn the Chinese writing system that most adults remain semi-illiterate and those who know even a little English find it easier to read an English book on a difficult subject than a Japanese one.

Mr. Stein has valuable first-hand information to give on China and believes that a Japanese attack on Russia would be disastrous for the whole world. Now that there are two poles of ever-increasing armaments, Berlin and Tokyo, he thinks that this time the world war may break out first in the East.

Militarism and Foreign Policy in Japan is an academic treatise concerning the part played by the military both in the past and during recent years, the origins of their power and their constitutional position. The author is somewhat inclined to put the cart before the horse, as, for instance, when he explains that the power of the Japanese Emperor is unbridled *because* he is regarded as divine, instead of showing that he was made divine in order to justify his power—in practice the power of the bureaucrats—being unbridled. He also says the corruption of the political parties *led* to their lack of power in the Diet, whereas history shows that they became corrupt because the Constitution gave them no power and because a middle class failed to come into existence.

None of the last three books, although they relate the facts of the February insurrection, try to explain what are the real relations of the military " extremists " with the plutocrats against whom their demagogic propaganda is directed. What, in fact, the two sections of the ruling class in Japan can best be compared to is that two-headed Milk Snake mentioned in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION review of *Searchlight on Animals*, whose two heads with separate necks two inches long fought each other at meals until the day when one head bit the other so severely that the whole animal died. The " young officer " extremists, who come mainly from the ranks of small landowners, petty traders and usurers, are one head and the big monopolists of industry, finance and trade are the other head. They continually fight each other for their food which is the product of the labour of the whole Japanese—and part of the Chinese—people. The interests of both heads are fundamentally the same, however fiercely they fight each other for the largest share. The militarists need the plutocrats to provide them with the sinews of war and the plutocrats need the militarists to provide them with new areas of exploitation. The militarists are continually afraid that the people will lay the blame for their terrible poverty on the military machine for whose sustenance they are so heavily taxed, and on the landowners who take half the harvest as rent. The army tries to prevent this by shouting as loudly as it can against the capitalists and by occasionally murdering some outstanding plutocrat or " corrupt politician." The big capitalist interests suffer this so long as the army goes on successfully adding colonies to the Japanese Empire for their benefit.

Let us hope that one day both sets of exploiters may meet the fate of the two-headed snake and leave both the Japanese people and the Chinese people free.

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The Soten Monoplane. By J. F. C. Westerman. *Oxford.* 3*s.* 6*d.*
The Secret of Lake Tana. By Air-Commodore L. E. O. Charlton. *Oxford.* 5*s.*

The books on this list hum with middle-class optimism. Tolstoy is, of course, excepted. Like Dickens he belongs to every class. Tolstoy wrote—and Professor Aylmer Maude quotes him in the introduction to the new, cheap edition of the tales:

> To compose a fairy tale, a touching little song, a lullaby, an entertaining riddle, an amusing jest, or to make a sketch which will delight dozens of generations or millions of children and adults, is incomparably more important and more fruitful than to compose a novel or paint a picture of the sort which will divert some members of the wealthy classes for a short time and then be for ever forgotten.

But when I glance again at *What Men Live By*, *A Prisoner in the Caucasus*, or *God Sees the Truth, but Waits*, I wonder how they stand in the twelve-year-olds' esteem before the claims of *The Menace of the Terribore*, or Mr. Robert Gibbings' *Cocoanut Island*. Perhaps Tolstoy is read before the class stamp comes down hard on the young; but when it does come what do the working-class children read? Is it a choice between the paper backs and the classics? Surely they do not read the jolly, well-fed, healthy, sporting middle-class stuff on this list, with its background of easy homes, sudden journeys to coral reefs, its plane trips to Abyssinia, its pleasing dinghies on the Solent? The poor seem to have gone out of juvenile fiction together with what brought them into it—Victorian self-pity and philanthropy. And good riddance to that kind of poor. Those intolerable vagabonds, the poor little godly guttersnipes, are well destroyed. But the fact remains that a middle-class suburban juvenile literature has followed, gadget-minded and confident. There is not a working-class hero anywhere among these books and hardly a working-class character. It is odd.

The books, in their kind, are none the worse for this. The charm of children's books is their assertion of a world of preposterous wishes come true and their flattering of the exclusiveness of youth and its momentous egoism. The most humdrum boy hits upon a plot against the Empire, stumbles upon secret planes, overhears significant conversations at every street corner, solves a mystery which has baffled the police for years, is always on holiday; and adults—greatest miracle of all!—are not bored with him but indeed defer. The ideal parents are provided also: I quote Mr. Gibbings:

> Thanks to an irresponsible father, now dead, his education had been somewhat erratic, but his lack of knowledge from books was amply made up for by his self-reliance and ability to do other things of at least equal importance.

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J. L. Hammond in the *New Statesman.*

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Mr. Gibbings' tale, delightfully illustrated by his own engravings, is far less crude than the general run. He strands his children on a desert island and is clever and charming in the handling of South Sea detail. One is convinced—and especially boys will be convinced—that with Mr. Gibbings' book as a guide one could be flung up on a palm-fringed shore with impunity. And the South Seas have been adroitly made up to date. The Man Friday who discovers the two marooned children is as sophisticated as they and asks, "You shure you not picture folks? And you shure you not gadding folks off a yacht?" before attempting rescue. I imagine this post-Coral Island diversion in the hands of what Messrs. Heal might call "the discriminating child."

Sampson's Circus might be called a *Good Companions* for the young. "So long, me old cockalorum!" says one of the characters and that is the note throughout. There are a number of cheerful larking characters who poke quiet English fun at one another and they are not all types. The ironical curate who wears glasses to please his vicar is an amusing and original creation. The story is about two boys who have adventures with a circus and the necessary undercurrent of excitement is provided by a kidnapping conspiracy. But the chief merits of the tale lie in the liveliness of the writing and the touches of exaggeration and fantasy in the character and dialogue:

> "Going back to 'Oxton to get yer 'air cut?" ventured Ben Bollard.
> "Nah."
> "Then what the dickens is it?" I asked.
> "It's an elephant wiv the collywobbles."

Before passing to the hair-raising volumes about secret monoplanes and foreign spies, there is Longman's *Adventure of Travel*, an agreeably modern anthology of travel. The names of Priestley, Smythe, Aldous and Julian Huxley, Peter Fleming, Tomlinson, Freya Stark and Howard Carter indicate the dignity and sobriety of the collection. It is all good stuff and some of it exciting. *Henry Against the Gang* is an intelligent book, too. It is by a Norwegian and has, apparently, had a great success on the Continent. The preposterous element is there: a boy is able to solve a mystery that has baffled the police for years. He is nevertheless a likeable character, and from the moment he blunders upon the mystery among the gipsies of a Norwegian wood and proceeds, in hospital, to the solution, the interest and excitement are of the most reasonable kind. It is a book for the quick-witted and its characters are striking.

For me when I was young character was everything. Surprise in plot and breath-taking adventure bored me unless the people were something more than thrillers' dummies. I would have preferred Mr. Gibbings, Mr. Spring and Mr. Johansen—the last above all, for he gets the best out of both worlds—to their successors. In this I may be prejudiced.

The Menace of the Terribore, for example, is Harpers' Prize novel, and there is something Wellsian in Colonel Mackworth's tale of a tank-like monster which burrows underground and attacks the vaults of the Bank of England. The opening chapter is a model for writers of this kind of fantasy, but I am not now and never was at my ease in the company of such cocky, confident young men as the heroes. But, if tense excitement is required, this book has it. And so has *The Soten Monoplane*, a book by an old hand. There is a long sailing chapter at the beginning which is full of that expert and delightful detail of the business of managing boats. The dialogue is pretty grim; but the youthful mind is such that the sight of dialogue blatantly at work upon the plot is as fascinating as seeing the wheels go round. I have in my time preferred bad dialogue to good. *The Secret of Lake Tana* is a longer work. Once more the young hero stumbles upon a secret which goes to the roots of international politics. He flies out to Abyssinia with Italian Fascists plotting against him and makes startling discoveries. There is much more character in this book and the hero is really remarkable in being "unappreciated by the B.B.C." and in being anti-Fascist. Boys' books are usually about the most brainless reactionaries and, one would think, might be nurseries of Fascism, the perfect examples of the kind of art desired by Mr. Goebbels for his "strength through joy" movement. Air Com. Charlton has not produced

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It is easy to demonstrate the importance of Forbes by considering what must have happened if he had never lived, or even if some accident had cut him off, say, in the year 1740. It is as sure as any speculation of the kind can be that in 1745 the Highland Host would have swept into England at more than twice the strength they actually mustered, that their numbers would have overcome the caution of the English and Welsh Jacobites, that they would not have turned back at Derby, and that the House of Hanover would now be remembered in English history as a transient and embarrassed dynastic phantom. That would have meant that we should have had no George III and presumably should not have lost the American colonies. And that would have meant—but here the possibilities become incalculably alarming. We can but quit them with the pious ejaculation: "God bless the Laird of Culloden!"

Forbes was the real maker of the Parliamentary Union of Scotland with England. The actual Treaty of Union of 1707 was not a national settlement but a rather inglorious *coup d'état* carried out by a few determined men who saw in it the only alternative to the ruin of their country and hence agreed without demur to the cruelly hard terms offered by England. It was unpopular in both countries, and there was widespread scepticism as to its permanence. Forbes, who was only a law student in 1707, had taken part in the tragic affair of Captain Green, and the experience had convinced him of the necessity of the Union. His public career was devoted to the task of converting the crazy structure of 1707 into a solid edifice. When in 1725 he became Lord Advocate he found Scotland still in the misery to which it had been reduced by the long agony of the previous century. When, twelve years later, he quitted his office to become Lord President of the Court of Session, he had established the conditions of civil order and economic reconstruction that were to bear remarkable fruit which he did not live to see ripen. The 'Forty-five came within an ace of undoing all his work. But the ace was Duncan Forbes. It was he, not Cumberland, who brought about the final defeat of Jacobitism, which history with delightful irony has managed to link eternally with the name Culloden.

Mr. Menary has made a contribution of the first importance to the political biography of the eighteenth century. His narrative might have had more fire—for flint and steel are there in plenty—but it is clear and scholarly, and the documentary material, which is embarrassingly rich, has been handled with excellent judgment.

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CHRISTMAS CARDS

A ROBIN from Rudolph, a puppy from Prue, mistletoe from Mary, a yew-tree from you; a belfry from Bobby, a *marquise* from May, these were my greetings last Christmas Day. But this year perhaps they'll find something slightly less refined. Cards of lace and gelatine, a coloured postcard of the Queen. Better still the Christmas card as produced by Messrs. Ward (let me guide your lazy feet to their shop in Baker Street). Here are cards with English views from Shell's admirable posters, photographs of Alp and lake, yachts and "dirty British coasters," Harvey, Whistler, Brynhild Parker, Cedric Morris and remark a view by Graham Sutherland; or, if you prefer another land, there are skiers on the go or an Austrian church in snow (Eliot Hodgkin's specially pretty, gay and Christmassy and witty).

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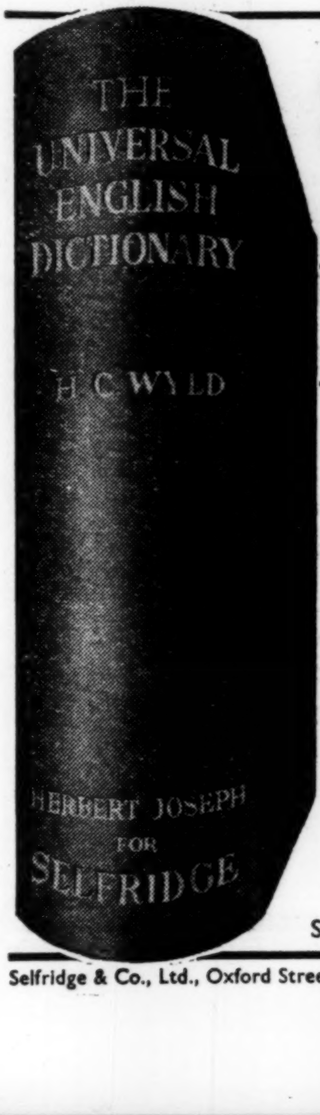

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SALAVIN

Salavin. By GEORGES DUHAMEL. *Dent.* 8s. 6d.

This volume contains four complete novels. The life-history of M. Duhamel's character represents twelve years of development on the part of a man who, although he is not yet very well known in England, is one of the most considerable authors in France. It is a work of such length, and, in my opinion, of such consequence, that I have felt justified in reviewing it alone: this week there was no other novel that could have accompanied it with anything save disadvantage to itself—treated with even the wildest good nature—and certainly none that deserved a place on the same page. Published at intervals between 1920 and 1932, and excellently translated by Mrs. Billings, these novels appear for the first time in English. I think Messrs. Dent's are to be congratulated on giving the public one of the best examples of value for money that has been seen for some time.

In the first book, *Confession at Midnight*, one finds the hero telling the author of his youth, and employing that peculiar, devious, apologetic idiom which helps to make him one of the intimately real characters of contemporary fiction. He repeats himself, verbally sidles, poeticises, prevaricates, but always faces up to the truth in the end. More than this, he makes his truth unusually absorbing. *The Confession* begins by his losing his obscure clerk's job through being unable to reject a violent temptation to touch his chief's ear with his finger. There follows, for the greater part of the book, a most searching and subtle description of the spiritual attrition that attacks sensitive persons given over to day-dreaming and physical sloth. Salavin lives on his mother, in permanent agonies of conscience, and from the first delay in shaving to the crowning horror of stepping on cracks in the pavement, there are few of the delicacies of disintegration which M. Duhamel has missed. Little temporary jobs, and little happinesses, even marriage to a devoted, phlegmatic seamstress, intervene, but one never ceases to feel that the forces of this divided character are assembling for a lifelong and desolating struggle. Behind the frailty, the nerves, and the shiftlessness, there begins to emerge a man prepared to destroy himself in the pursuit of goodness and truth. *The Confession* ends when Salavin is thirty years old. He is the prey of phantasies, and of the Paris streets, among which we leave him, and of which there are exquisite pictures. In self-disgust, he has abandoned Marguerite, his wife, and his mother, to their tiny flat in the Rue Pot-de-Fer.

Salavin's Journal is presented differently, as a diary of ten years later. A son has died, and he is at work as accountant in a milk agency, living once more with his family. The early pages here are filled with a most astonishing mixture of humour and pathos. Almost ridiculous, always somehow impressive, Salavin has resolved to become a saint. He plans out a sort of itinerary towards perfection, to occupy fifteen years, and, as he travels, even the most ludicrous mishaps assume, because of his aching sincerity, the likeness of martyrdom. There is his custom, for example, of pinching his finger in the door every morning. One day his wife, to whom he is becoming more and more of a mystery, shuts the door by mistake, and he loses a nail. There is his trick of writing *tourist* instead of *saint*, in case the two women should find the diary. There are, too, the little psychological touches with which M. Duhamel so adroitly rounds out his character: "I'm beginning to dream again that I can fly. . . ." Slowly, the inner battle intensifies, and there starts the search for grace on the part of a man with no Christian faith. Chastity appears of prime importance, and he tells Marguerite, who has begun to squint with the constant effort of trying to understand him, that he must go away and have a room of his own, which he does. Priests are visited; confessions are made with too little to confess. The last of these, in the church of St. Médard, where a fanatical young Abbé strives passionately against Salavin's faltering but unquenchable honesty, is one of the finest scenes in all four books. This second epoch in his life finishes in a hospital because of a characteristically absurd incident in which he deprives himself of his shoes in the middle of Paris on a wet night.

The Lyonnais Club is a novel of conversations. It begins a year after his illness, and covers the period when Salavin finds a certain intellectual maturity. If he succeeds little better, he blunders less, on his way to self-realisation. His one desire has always been to change himself, from small to big, and, unable to achieve faith, he turns to knowledge. Through a friend, Aufrère, whose rôle and influence is that of the pure intellectual, the observer, he is introduced to a circle of Communists. M. Duhamel, in his account of these types, and the cobbler's shop where they meet, reaches a versatility and a detachment which, even for him, are unusual. One evening, they round on Salavin, the "bourgeois." He tells them that he understands their discontent with the world, but asks if they are never discontented with themselves. They reply that there is no reason why they should be, and repeat that in changing society they will change the conscience of man. Salavin disagrees vehemently, and then the leader asks him why he is so anxious to change himself.

> "Why?" Fontaine repeated gently.
>
> Salavin dropped his head and in low tones, but so distinctly that everyone could hear, he said:
>
> "Because I am a coward."

The time comes when he is arrested with the entire group, and his mother is killed by the shock of having the flat invaded and ravaged by the police. He receives these catastrophes as warnings of increasing uselessness and increasing sameness, and, secretly, he determines to leave Europe in order to devote himself to the final test. He is bent on benefiting his fellows in the personal, perhaps restricted, way which is still the only one he can conceive of. His dazed wife is again compelled to suffer his torments with him, and yet away from him: she reads his note, ". . . I have come out of my shell, have watched men. . . . They do not know what they want, nor what they are saying, nor what they are doing. . . ."

The last book, the *End of Illusion*, changes the setting from Paris to Tunis. It is possibly the least successful of the four, because M. Duhamel has made something of a mistake, as I see it, in withdrawing his hero overmuch into himself. The atmosphere, moreover, seems often unbearably thick with the approaching tragedy. In the intervals of running a gramophone shop, Salavin returns to good works of a more formidable kind in a native hospital. Ingratitude, deceit, and baseness make a victorious stand in the shape of his horrible young Arab servant, Moktar, who is presented with fearful realism. Lengthy, but increasingly infrequent conversations with a schoolmaster friend, Dargoult, give the reader hints that the disharmony will never be quite resolved.

> The heroes of fables are people who don't stop to think . . . how unjust it all is, Dargoult! Why not me? I ask you: how can a

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> person resign himself to being nothing but what he is? And how without folly can he try to be something that he is not?

Moktar goes from bad to amok, and shoots him in the leg. Dargoult sends for his wife, and finds a letter that contains significant lines:

> I believed that in measuring all things by a constant rule I could avoid confusion; but that is not true.
>
> I am bored and lonely. Another great shame.

Marguerite just has time to transport him to the Rue Pot-de-Fer, where their last moments together are ones of intensest regret mixed with tardy happiness. As each reader will decide for himself, Salavin has either "failed" or "succeeded."

In Paris, I have often heard M. Duhamel charged with sentimentality, and I think that there may be a grain of truth in the accusation. But I cannot do less than say that I am convinced that traces of this quality will readily be forgiven him by the readers of *Salavin*. If the author looks at life with a trifle less than ideal objectivity, he looks at it equipped with intellectual and emotional powers not given to many. *Louis Salavin* is completely alive, which will disquiet some and encourage others. Half thwarted, easily despised, miserable, yet unwilling to take refuge in either of those commodious old booby-traps, Politics and organised Religion, he is one of those who may, if they can escape the concentration camps, and if we are all very lucky indeed, just manage to keep civilisation going. BRIAN HOWARD

SHORT STORIES

Collected Short Stories. By STELLA BENSON. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.

The Best Short Stories of 1936: English and American. Edited by EDWARD O'BRIEN. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.

Stella Benson's death has left a gap in writing: that there cannot be another novel of her's this year, next year or ever breeds more than melancholy, an irritated feeling of deprivation—of interruption, almost as though the wire on which she had been speaking were senselessly cut. Her silence still seems accidental. She was unselfconsciously odd; her quick, personal writing came like spurts of confidence from a naturally abstracted person, between long silent journeys of curiosity across continents or in her own mind. The world she ranged was fantastic, but she saw it objectively, with geographical features, craters and ridges able to be mapped out. She presented her maps of fantasy matter-of-factly: she was not an escapist; she lived in her own element, dealt with her own facts. Human queerness seemed to her rational, and she gave it its place in what rational life there is: her creatures are curious only in being unnervingly likely: they have the universal submentality—they are ostentatious, shy, hopeful, frustrated, anxious to boast, unable to communicate, a race of ex-gods or unhappy fairies, in ignominious bodies. Desire, its power of enlarging the person who feels it and of making its object momentous and clear, interested her: she did not measure desire, or rate it by its object, and therefore gave no special place to love. In fact love, as a sentiment, disintegrates at her touch; her Mr. Robinson's feeling for the brood of young mice, his nostalgia for the group of shadowy diners on the hotel terrace have more hopeless dignity than a sexual passion. The beloved is, in her view, no more than the mouse, the pet of prisoned fancy; she pities the self-bound self. Pity, with her, is lively, sapient, penetrating but cold, with a mocking edge to it: a sort of fairy pity. But pity was the deep source of what emotion she had: she suffered the intellectual for his humbling muddles, the successful for their aberrations, the confident for their qualms. She could anatomise vanity without spite or fervour; she was a satirist with no moral stance. She was innocent of archness and whimsicality—those foes of the English fanciful writer—for archness and whimsicality condescend. Her feeling for human beings was incidental: she was a novelist, bound to write about them, so she swung round a sixth sense, a cosmic imagination, to bear on them vaguely, almost fortuitously, but with a fatal exactness. She liked better landscape, dogs, and moving figures when they were like ants. Mass-mentality was her major nightmare, and she had many: the American nation, in which she chose to locate this, was an abstract monster to her. She liked private enterprise—in pirates, angels, brigands, inquiring Orientals, indomitable shabby women, dogs.

These collected short stories show Stella Benson's proclivities, her powers, her prejudices. They are valuable, apart from their own merit, as the last writing of hers that we shall get, unless there are letters. She wrote so well—the poetic plainness and vitality of her style cannot be enough praised—that whatever she did was, in different degrees, good. She was not a short storyist: these stories give the effect of style and imagination being applied, with ability, to an unfamiliar form. Clever people can do anything—but she was used to exploring any chosen subject more continuously. There are several fantasies (of which the first, *The Awakening*, is the best). The straight short stories seem to be germs of novels: one wants to see them expand. *The Desert Islander*, *Hairy Carey's Son* and *The Man who Missed the Bus* are disturbing and excellent. And there is the satire *Tchotl*, hardly a story—one cannot all the time be fair to Americans.

Americans are more than fair to themselves in Mr. O'Brien's *Best Stories of* 1936: *English and American*. In gusto and verbosity they overpower the English. A sort of neutral dullness—mistakenly called high-brow—too often settles on the English writer when he attempts, as he now often does, this form. The stories in this collection are examples of the short story written for its own sake (as opposed to the stories of Stella Benson, written for fun, or to order). Proper revulsion against decorated, ingenious writing has brought in, over here, a flat, clattering style in which one hears the typewriter. If anonymity in style be the objective, this has been achieved—it would be difficult, opening the English half of the book at random, to tell one writer's work from half a dozen others'—but achieved at a loss of the colour, tempo and temper that are a great part of style. There is, also, monotony of subject: sex-troubles of inarticulate young people recur and recur. The non-commercial—or art-for-art's-sake—short story would not have so few commercial openings in England if it were not so often academic in feeling and complacently dull. We look elsewhere for moral exercises: no one wants short stories that are a labour to read. The best stories in this half—Arthur Calder-Marshall's *Straw Hat*, T. O. Beechcroft's *May-Day Celebrations*, H. E. Bates' *The Mill*, G. F. Green's *A Death in the Family*—are differentiated and vigorous. Leslie Halward has written better stories than *The Mother*. Christopher Isherwood shows a brief, able sketch. None of the other stories ought to be damned, but they do not collect well: there is too much of the same thing.

American story-writers certainly have a start here: their

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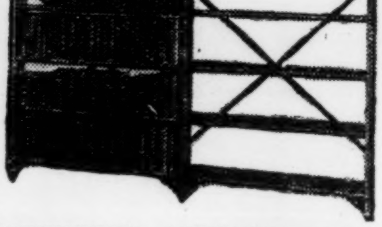

Against

Christmas presents—

No one in their conventional senses gives political books at Christmas. All right, sit in your armchair, drink your whisky, and be damned. The reality of things happening in the world to-day is, in our view, more exciting than any thriller. Here are books which are food for thought, which rub the rust off your deep buried convictions, stir you to wrath. We suggest: **Reporter in Spain** 2*s.* 6*d.* by the adventurous young Labour movement journalist, Frank Pitcairn, he takes you right into the front line, outside Madrid. The winning of this fight for Democracy is as much your business as it is that of the Spanish militiaman's—or Frank Pitcairn's for that matter! In " To-morrow: what Spain Means to You," he has an article on The International Brigade, which turned the scale at Madrid. (Our ' special,' 16 pages, illustrated, 1*d.*). ¶ You can rub shoulders with the unemployed man's problems in Hannington's book (yes, he is a relation of Bishop Hannington of missionary fame) **Unemployed Struggles, 1919-1936** price 10*s.* 6*d.* There is not a page of sloppy sentiment in the whole 400. This book is infinitely better than any thriller, in fact, it shows that the men who fought at Ypres are just as courageous against their local tyrants; not to speak of marching in columns of fours against hunger and police batons, from Aberdeen to London, as many times as you have fingers on your hands. The book is well illustrated. ¶ If you are a professional man or industrial specialist, **Britain without Capitalists** price 8*s.* 6*d.*, will give you confidence in common sense once more, make your whisky taste better, besides setting your mind to many fascinating problems. And it shows the *Communist* view of planning as opposed both to the economists' fantasia of it and the militarists' grim conscription of it (they *can* plan: but what sort of planning). ¶ Freedom, banner flying *'gainst* the wind, is much in our minds this Christmas. Stalin's **Speech on the New Constitution** at 6*d.* will make a convincing topical present for yourself. **Men, Medicine and Food in the U.S.S.R.** (Le Gros Clark and Noel Brinton, 5*s.*) has been praised by Professor Julian Huxley (" a very important study, much of which is extremely relevant to the problem in this country, which members of all parties agree is urgent, of providing an adequate diet for the community at large "), by V. N. Mottram, Dr. Marrack, D. Stark Murray and many others. **Scenes from Soviet Life**, by W. P. and Zelda Coates (illustrated, 5*s.*), has been welcomed by A. J. Cummings ("a thoroughly entertaining as well as a revealing book "), Hannen Swaffer, Tom Johnston, M.P., the *Daily Herald*, *Forward*, *Reynold's*, etc. ¶ We do not insult New Statesman readers by supposing that our new edition of the **Marxist-Leninist** classics will not be the most popular gift. You must have read " The Handbook of Marxism," or Strachey's new book and wanted to read the whole text of the classics: here is the list: (1) Anti-Dühring, F. Engels, 364 pp., 5*s.* (2) Ludwig Feuerbach, F. Engels, 101 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (3) Letters to Kugelmann, K. Marx, 148 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (4) Class Struggles in France, K. Marx, 160 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (5) Civil War in France, K. Marx, 92 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (6) Germany: Revolution and Counter Revolution, F. Engels, 156 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (7) The Housing Question, F. Engels, 103 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (8) Poverty of Philosophy, K. Marx, 214 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (9) Correspondence of Marx and Engels, 550 pp., 5*s.* (10) Marx, Engels, Marxism, V. I. Lenin, 226 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (11) The October Revolution, J. Stalin, 168 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (12) Marxism and the National and Colonial Question, J. Stalin, 304 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (13) Marx and the Trade Unions, A. Lozovsky, 188 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* (14) Fundamental Problems of Marxism, G. Plekhanov, 146 pp., 2*s.* 6*d.* Most can afford £2, which is all the fourteen books come to. But if you are tight after your other fandalas get them at once—and pay for them 2*s.* 6*d.* a month (any bookseller will help you). ¶ Or are you worried about what books to buy your nephews, so that they will not grow up into Baldwins, Beaverbrooks, or even Duff Coopers? May we recommend Geoffrey Trease's **Missing from Home** 3*s.* 6*d.* (also his Bows Against the Barons 1*s.*, Call to Arms 2*s.* 6*d.*) and **Rebels of the Goldfields** by Jack Lindsay 5*s.*, illustrated. ¶ Are these not " presenty " enough? Then try **Ascent of Mount Stalin**—the Soviet Mount Everest, almost unexplored, with thirty photographs of the Pamirs. Twice open British Chess Champion William Winter offers the best 10*s.* 6*d.* worth since Stanton —**Chess for Match Players.** And for poetry—and liberty—enthusiasts we have **Goodbye, Twilight** 2*s.* 6*d.* a collection of verse in the great tradition by the peasants, workers and intellectuals of Ireland to-day. As a Christmas card send C. Day Lewis's " We are *not* going to do nothing " 6*d.*—a reply to Aldous Huxley.

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idiom is striking, their subjects have foreign charm. Several American stories in this volume do suffer, also, from literary blight, or are self-consciously high-class—*Annunciation* is a bad case of this. But on the whole their half has variation and speed. The two manners in American writing—the staccato, the prosy—are well exhibited here: the best of the stories commit themselves to neither. Dorothy McCleary's *The Shroud* has a gruesome vivacity. Tess Slessinger, who cannot have written a dull page, is fairly, if not handsomely represented by *A Life in the Day of a Writer:* she is young, but she has her dangers ahead. Almost all the stories are adequate; some err on the homely, chatty side. William Faulkner is, inevitably, there.

ELIZABETH BOWEN

FINALE

War Memoirs of David Lloyd George. Vol. VI. *Ivor Nicholson and Watson.* 21s.

This final volume of Mr. Lloyd George's Memoirs extends from the German summer offensive of 1918 until the signature of the armistice in November. It does not, I think, compare in importance with the earlier volumes, though it is written with the same blunt directness of style and the same incomparable vigour. There are interesting side-lights on Sir Henry Wilson and Lord Haig, and Mr. Lloyd George is able very effectively to show how little they appreciated the objective military situation when the German power was crumbling. There is an ingenious attempt to defend intervention in Russia which will not, I suspect, convince anyone save the devotees of Mr. Lloyd George. A glowing tribute is paid to the Education Act of 1918, though Mr. Lloyd George does not recount how much of its benefits were destroyed in the feverish economy mania of 1921. The book concludes with two important chapters respectively on Lord Haig's war diaries and on the relations between statesmen and soldiers in war.

On the Haig controversy, so far as the material is yet available, I think it must be said that, in large part, Mr. Lloyd George has made out his case. No one can, after the memoranda he has published, seriously argue that Haig was a great soldier. He was plodding, traditionally efficient, unimaginative, a fine gentleman in the historic sense. He was capable of unjustifiable intrigue. He was a poor judge of ability. He had never any profound sense either of the need for novelty in technique or for wider vistas in strategic conception than those to which he was habituated when the war began—even at the close he still thought in terms of the cavalry pushing through. That he was ungenerous in his appreciation of Mr. Lloyd George seems to me a minor count in the indictment against him: Haig can hardly have failed to know that his Prime Minister was not exactly overflowing with admiration for his qualities. But I do think that, whatever the temperamental differences between the men, Mr. Lloyd George is able to demonstrate that Haig was no more than a solid routineer who did not rise either to his opportunities or to the needs of his great position. I still do not understand why, on this showing, Haig was kept in his command. Mr. Lloyd George speaks of political considerations which made this unavoidable. It is yet difficult to feel that he was entitled to take the risk of keeping in the supreme military place a man whose unfitness for it he has been careful to demonstrate at such length.

A good deal of his final chapter is, in general outline, unanswerable; the necessity for civilian supremacy in all ultimate decisions of policy flows unanswerably from the nature of constitutional democracy. More, I think no one can have read his account of Sir Henry Wilson's habits without seeing that the greater the influence such men exercise, the less likely is constitutional government to survive. But a good deal of the difficulty upon which Mr. Lloyd George dwells comes, as he recognises, from the very nature of our professional Army. So long, as he puts it, as the possession of brains is only fourth in the order of desirable qualities, so long it will be ill-adapted to its essential function. And brains will continue to rank low in the order of desirability so long as the Army fails to be, as it still fails to be, a broad highway open to the talents. The democratisation of the Army is, on Mr. Lloyd George's showing, a fundamental pre-requisite to success in war. Indeed, no Army can, with safety to democracy, be confined in its choice of officers to a narrow social class without developing habits and opinions of which the Ulster crisis was the logical outcome. We cannot afford another Curragh mutiny, and the price of its avoidance is a very thorough reconstruction of the army system.

Mr. Lloyd George has some important, if rather cruel, reflections on the separation of the high command in modern warfare from the troops it sends to their death; and he compares, in their disfavour, the comforts in which the generals live with the situation in the Navy, where the Jellicoes, the Beattys and the Sturdees share the dangers of their men. It is a difficult problem. But it is not confined to the soldiers. How far can Cabinet Ministers in Whitehall enter imaginatively into the lives of the unemployed whose conditions they have never known? How far can eminent civil servants, so largely drawn from the public schools and the older universities, know from within the problems and difficulties of those whose lives they so profoundly shape? Would not Lord Rushcliffe have a deeper appreciation of what the Means Test really means if he had been compelled to live, say for three months, under the conditions it imposes? Mr. Lloyd George's doubts are not, I suspect, relevant to a single medium. They are, so far as they are not directly related to an inevitable technique, the necessary consequence of a society which has made inequality its religion and given to the privileged the right to determine the standard at which the disinherited must live.

HAROLD J. LASKI

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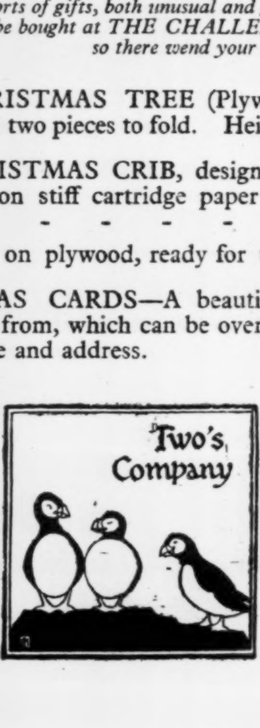

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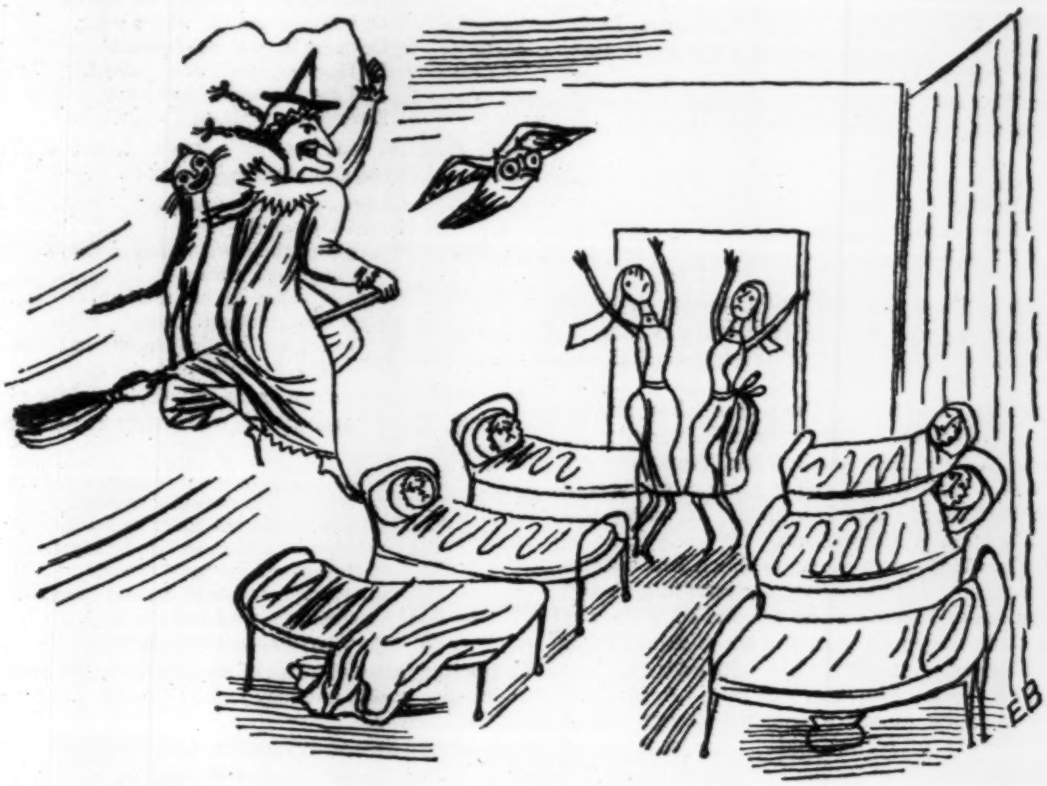
MR. YEATS FUMBLES

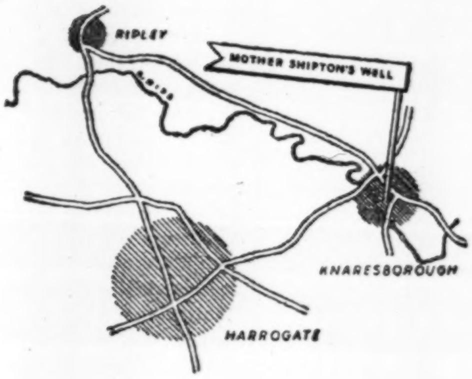
The Oxford Book of Modern English Verse. Chosen by W. B. YEATS. *Oxford University Press.* 8s. 6d.

Being on holiday, I read two reviews of Mr. Yeats's anthology before I came to the book itself. One, written by Mr. John Hayward in the *Spectator*, was frank condemnation. The other appeared, anonymously, in the *Times Literary Supplement*; and this reviewer, after warning us all to be respectful, because Mr. Yeats is Mr. Yeats, went on to praise cautiously for two columns under the heading, "A Time of Literary Confusion." He left the impression that Mr. Yeats, if not actually clearing the confusion, had at least not added to it. As to the merits of the book as an anthology, his argument seemed to be that because Mr. Yeats is our greatest living poet (which few would deny), we should



Mother Shipton's Well

but SHELL'*s better*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YOU CAN BE SURE OF SHELL

herefore accept him without question as critic and anthologist. Why? On the same lines we might have had George Moore's choice of the twenty best English novels (including Hall Caine), or a gallery of the paintings admired by Van Gogh. Mr. Yeats's *Oxford Book of Modern English Verse* has as much reliability. The poets first on his list, to judge by the space allotted them, are Miss Edith Sitwell, Mr. Herbert Read, Mr. W. J. Turner, Lady Gerald Wellesley and Mr. Laurence Binyon. I suggest that Wilfrid Owen, Emily Dickinson, Mr. Robert Frost, Mr. Peter Quennell, Mr. Dylan Thomas (all omitted), would do just as well. On p. 224 there appears this poem by Shri Purohit Swami:

> A Miracle Indeed
>
> A Miracle indeed!
> Thou art Lord of All Power.
> I asked a little power,
> Thou gavest me a begging-bowl.
> (*From his own Urdu.*)

Three pages of Hardy to twenty-eight of Edith Sitwell, fourteen lines of Rupert Brooke to 450 of Herbert Read, thirteen lines of Edward Thomas to 430 of Lady Gerald Wellesley—and so on, and so on.

With all these oddities *The Oxford Book of Modern English Verse* might still be a good book. It might reveal a trend, as an anthology selected, say, by Mr. Eliot would: Mr. Yeats's choices from Auden and Spender, from D. H. Lawrence, are as wretchedly bad as his choices from Hardy and Housman. It might still represent a strong idiosyncrasy. It does not.

What the book suffers from most is not so much bad taste as an incoherent tastelessness. Why on earth, one wonders, should Mr. Yeats have taken the trouble to rewrite *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* and select the Mona Lisa passage from Pater to print as free verse, when he doesn't mind stuffing his pages with odds and ends from anywhere? The Introduction does not help. Apart from its inadequacy as a historical sketch, it contains strange critical blunders. Pound is made to follow Eliot. The choruses of *Samson Agonistes* are stated to be in sprung rhythm. It is asserted as a dogma that "passive suffering is not a theme for poetry," and the war poets are ruled out on that account.

Despite its title, *The Oxford Book of Modern English Verse* does not represent a period, and it cannot seriously be reviewed as if it did.

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Justice has been done to Irish poets, thirty or more of them (though even here there are omissions). Oliver St. John Gogarty will be new to nearly all English readers, and delightful he is:

> If medals were ordained for drinks
> Or soft communings with a minx,
> Or being at your ease belated,
> By Heavens, you'd be decorated.
> And not Alcmena's chesty son
> Have room to put your ribands on!

F. R. Higgins, too, another personal friend of Yeats, is lively with a more local and chanting accent:

> God rest that Jewy woman,
> Queen Jezebel, the bitch
> Who peeled the cloths from her shoulder-bones
> Down to her spent teats
> As she stretched out of the window
> Among the geraniums, where
> She chaffed and laughed like one half daft
> Titivating her painted hair. . . .

It is a collection in which one is grateful indeed for such revelations.

Lastly, Yeats's own poems, too sparely chosen, make a splendid impression.

> Speech after long silence; it is right,
> All other lovers being estranged or dead,
> Unfriendly lamplight hid under its shade,
> The curtains drawn upon unfriendly night,
> That we descant and yet again descant
> Upon the supreme theme of Art and Song:
> Bodily decrepitude is wisdom; young
> We loved each other and were ignorant.

Comparing that with some of the pieces written by others on whom he lavishes praise, one may indeed wonder if he sees any poetry outside his own.

G. W. Stonier

MR. OXFORD AND MR. LIVERPOOL

The Two Mr. Gladstones. By G. T. Garratt. *Macmillan.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

There are clear and welcome signs that Mr. Gladstone is coming into his own, of which the number and quality of the books published on him and his family this year is one. Many things have contributed since the war to give the impression that he was dull. The first reaction to Victorianism—stimulated by the childhood recollections of people who were quite unrepresentative of it—was that it was boring, pompous and hypocritical. As the author of this book points out, Gladstone—perhaps the most typical Victorian—became identified with those characteristics. Disraeli—who was not even typical of the Victorian Jew—enjoyed conversely a quite unmerited adulation. But now that at long last it is beginning to dawn on the twentieth century that the Victorian Age was really one of stupendous vitality which exactly understood how to combine dignity and enjoyment, Gladstone is beginning to be appreciated at his true value. A trivial point which also has told against him is that Morley's *Life*—a fascinating book—looks exceedingly dull from the outside while Moneypenny and Buckle's six pedestrian volumes on Disraeli stand out alluringly on the shelves in their blue and gold. Mr. Garratt—who writes of Gladstone with sympathy and skill—has made him emerge from a very carefully drawn political background as a human, lovable figure. He has taken for his theme the two influences of Gladstone's youth—Oxford and Liverpool—which remained with him always and dominated his mind. His authority for believing in this dual personality is a phrase of Mrs. Gladstone's to John Morley that whoever wrote her husband's life "must remember that he had two sides."

It is, of course, impossible to write of Gladstone without being a partisan, but there are only two instances in which I think Mr. Garratt could be charged with being unfair. One is in his treatment of Queen Victoria. He seems to have adopted too completely the idea that she was anti-Liberal. She distrusted Gladstone and her only comment at his death was "I never liked him." A study of Lord Salisbury's life would show that he, only less than Gladstone, suffered from the Queen's interference. She was not a partisan Conservative (indeed she always called herself a Liberal): she rather regarded herself as the guardian of the country's prestige. Mr. Garratt also seems unduly harsh on the Whigs. It was, I think, Mr. Lloyd George who, in

Christmas 1936

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his amiable way, once described some of his former Cabinet colleagues as "oleaginous Whigs." A case could certainly be made out that Whigs (oleaginous or otherwise) are often more consistent in their opinions than those who are eager to abuse them. Mr. Garratt would certainly agree that it was the loud-mouthed Radicals quite as much as the Whigs who deserted Mr. Gladstone over Home Rule.

In this year, the centenary of Chamberlain's birth, Mr. Garratt's admirably severe portrait of that worthy is timely. In spite of the whoopings of Protectionists, in spite of the interminable labours of Mr Garvin, it would be easy in one short, sharp volume to show Mr. Chamberlain as he really was—as pinchbeck and meretricious as the jewellery of his beloved Birmingham. Equally firm is Mr. Garratt's treatment of Gladstone's responsibility for Gordon's death. Those who have glibly argued that he should have recalled Gordon in 1884 seem unaware of his difficulties with the Cabinet. If Gordon had been recalled both Lord Hartington and Lord Selborne, and probably some of the lesser fry, would have resigned so that the Government would have had to appeal to the country, thereby destroying some of their most valuable work at home, particularly, as Mr. Garratt points out, Chamberlain's measures against the overloading of ships and the sweating of sailors. Finally in August, Gladstone agreed that a relief expedition should be sent which would have been in plenty of time had not the Army made all kinds of difficulties and delays. When Buller was approached about sending a camel corps he replied, "The man is not worth the camels," a remark with which few would have disagreed had not Gordon's death transformed him into a Tory hero.

It is very refreshing in these nervous days to read of Gladstone's determined pacifism and complete lack of sympathy for the military mind. I can only wish that these words of Gladstone's secretary—most effectively quoted by Mr. Garratt—might hang in the Cabinet room (if only to bring a blush to the cheeks of those who once were proud to invoke his name):

> I never heard him say a word which showed the slightest interest in the Navy or the Army, except in so far as their cost, which he was always anxious to cut down, affected the Estimates; nor can I remember his ever referring with pride and satisfaction to any British feat of arms, ancient or modern, although he was often eloquent about the prowess of the "Montenegreens," as he always called them, in their wars with the Turks. If there was ever a statesman who deserved to be called "a man of peace" Mr. Gladstone was that man.

ROGER FULFORD

FUN WITHOUT GAMES

Muddling Through. By THEODORA BENSON, BETTY ASKWITH, and NICOLAS BENTLEY. *Gollancz.* 6s.

Die? I Thought I'd Laugh. By NICOLAS BENTLEY. *Methuen.* 5s.

How to Live in a Flat. By HEATH ROBINSON and K. R. G. BROWNE. *Hutchinson.* 5s.

General Forcursue and Co. By GEORGE C. NASH. *Chatto and Windus.* 5s.

Exploring the Avenues. By R. S. CLEMENT BROWN. *Heffer.* 5s.

How To Do and Say in England. By A. ROBERTSON and J. S. GOODALL. *Lovat Dickson.* 3s. 6d.

The Perfect Pest. By ADRIAN PORTER. *Collins.* 5s.

Will Someone Lead Me to a Pub? By THOMAS BURKE. *Routledge.* 3s. 6d.

Brave Old World. By HUGH KINGSMILL and MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 5s.

Excuse It, Please! By CORNELIA OTIS SKINNER and SOGLOW. *Lovat Dickson* and *Peter Davies.* 6s.

My Ten Years in a Quandary. By ROBERT BENCHLEY. *Harper.* 7s. 6d.

It is still possible to read Elizabethan jest-books with pleasure. That any of the mass of merriment listed above will raise a giggle even in a hundred years' time is doubtful. The trouble seems to be that the jester has become a gentleman, and rather a humanitarian gentleman at that. Most of Beatrice's *Hundred Merry Tales* were about cuckoldry, but that amuses us no longer. The Victorian's favourite snob joke was the Cockney sportsman. He is no longer funny, and the pun too has had its day. The most successful formulae for humour to-day appear to be the collection of clichés and the coy confession of minor neuroses.

Muddling Through or Britain in a Nutshell is by the collaborators who produced *Foreigners* last year. It explains all about England in simple, well-worn words. It is nicely printed on large pages and broken up into numbered sections. Here is the subsection on Cockneys in the London section:—

> Cockneys are poor people born within the sound of Bow Bells. They are the salt of the earth. They have a dialect that is justly popular because when you imitate it people know that you are talking Cockney (see Lancashire). Cockneys are good-natured, shrewd, plucky, quick as a knife and very witty. Examples of Cockney humour: "Garn" and "You're another."

The illustrations are by Nicolas Bentley and mostly good.

Die? I Thought I'd Laugh is a collection of Nicolas Bentley's latest drawings. It is dedicated "with gratitude and some affection to amiable everyday nitwits." In spite of this deplorable dedication the drawings which follow it are often pleasantly morbid or acidulated. But Mr. Bentley is really at his best when he has somebody else's book to illustrate His best jokes have a way of being "nearly New Yorker."

In *How To Live in a Flat* Mr. Heath Robinson has done it again—121 times to be precise. His machinery is more ingenious than ever, and his suspicion of progress with special reference to flat-dwelling is almost bitter. Mr. K. R. G. Browne explains the pictures:

> One advantage of modern furniture is that there is plenty of room for small animals beneath it—though it was left to Mr. Heath Robinson to exploit that self-evident fact. Consequently a little wire-netting (obtainable at any reputable ironmonger's) is all that is needed to convert, say, a chair into a neat rabbit-hutch or parrot-cage.

General Forcursue and Co. is a sequel to *Letters to the Secretary of a Golf Club.* Mr. Nash is one of *Punch's* best contributors. His humour is genial. The beastly admirals who write rude letters prove to have hearts of gold really. The illustrations are pleasant.

Mr. Clement Brown also thanks the proprietors of *Punch* for permission to reprint *Exploring the Avenues.* The cover design is a notorious picture by Hobbema with a Fougasse explorer inset. Mr. Brown explores both in verse and prose. Here is part of a discussion between a scientist and a layman on the inadequacy of the sun:—

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"A common error, thirdly,"
Said the expert, "is to claim an
Overestimated size for it—a bulk that facts belie."
"I think that it's absurdly
Undersized," replied the layman—
"Like a puny blood-red orange in a leaden winter sky."

The prose parts are good of their kind and succeed in being satirical without being ungentlemanly. *Exploring the Avenues* would be an excellent book to read after a large Christmas dinner.

How To Do and Say in England is a comic guide to English idiom and behaviour for German students. It is overdone. Here is a sample :—

> If you take a rosy view of some pretty girl next alongside, do not nudge or tickle, but merely smile gravely and aver "We seem to be getting on like a cat on hot bricks, eh? You charm me, oh really!"

The Perfect Pest consists of light social verses. It begins :—

She merely sent a wire to say
That she was coming down to stay.
She brought a maid of minxsome look
Who promptly quarrelled with the cook.

It goes on like that too.

Will Someone Lead Me to a Pub? is not a proper funny book—except in so far as the English find everything connected with the art of drinking absurd. It is a garrulous account of the distinguishable taverns of London. Anyone requiring an intelligent man's guide to bigger and better pub-crawling will find it invaluable. Mr. Burke knows everything worth knowing about the history of the London public house and he writes briefly and well.

Brave Old World is political and has the un-English quality of bitterness. It is an historical extravaganza in the *This England* manner. It is a sustained parody of innumerable newspapers, and provides their probable reactions to a year of likely but impossible happenings at home and abroad. Here is a quotation from the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION'S opinion of the trouble in Denmark :

> It is now confirmed that M. Laertes, like King Claudius and the Crown Prince, has met a violent end, and that a small clique of officers, led by General Fortinbras, has seized power. The credentials of General Fortinbras for his self-imposed task are, to say the least, singular.

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The drawings are as insolent as the text. It would make a fine present for any politician or dyspeptic journalist.

Excuse It Please! is a book of American essays in neurotic discomfort by Miss Cornelia Otis Skinner. It is illustrated by Soglow. Miss Skinner has grave difficulty with telephones, skates, horses, stars, school friends, dance floors and painters :

> In my face, then, the painter finds all these homely beauties. It is his ancient crony, his dead fish and radishes, his roaring forties and his Percheron. For, to put it with the bland precision of a connoisseur who tried to explain to me the higher principles of Art: "A good painter would never do a bowl of roses in preference to an ash can."

Mr. Benchley has been in a Quandary for ten years and they have been growing. Mr. Benchley has a number of very plausible explanations to offer for everything and they don't help in the very least. Mr. Benchley can rouse enthusiasm for a funny book in a reviewer who has first read ten other funny books. He is difficult to quote because his way of writing is to cut away the ground from beneath his readers until they are left straddling over an abyss. This is a gradual process and takes time and space. However, here are a few random snippets :—

> While I am balancing my newspaper, and folding and unfolding it, and knocking over cream pitchers, and salt cellars, and getting everything set to read two paragraphs of a full column story, the Grim Reaper has stalked in among my breakfast dishes, laying his icy hand on egg and muffin alike.
>
> A strange case has just come to light involving an artist's model in London, who, to date, has not been able to drive one man mad. She hasn't been able even to drive one man to drink. The police are working on it now. . . .
>
> The surest way to make a monkey of a man is to quote him. That remark in itself wouldn't make any sense if quoted as it stands. . . .

Nobody could make a monkey of Mr. Benchley. He is a force of nature.

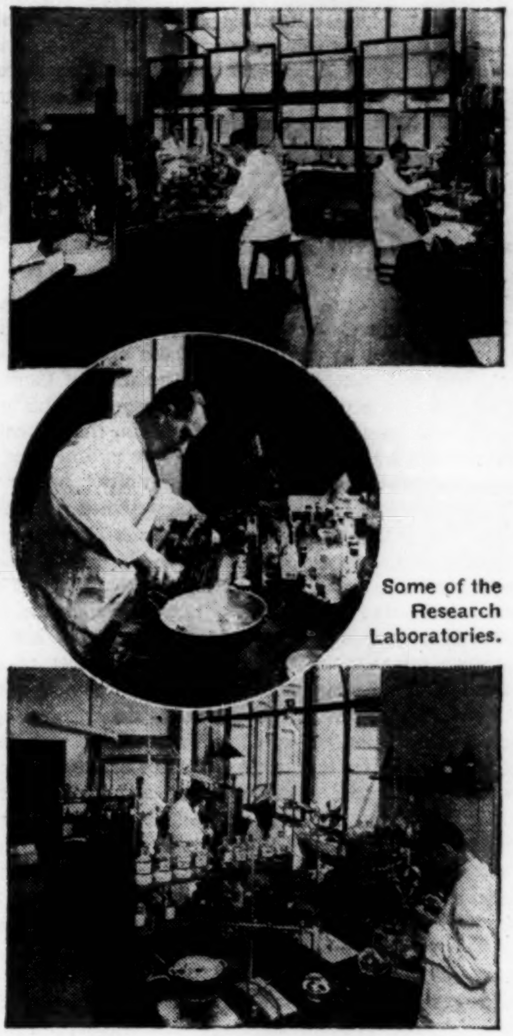
FREDERICK LAWS

LOCKHART—VOL. III

Return to Malaya. By R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART. *Putnam.* 10s. 6d.

My admiration for Mr. Bruce Lockhart dates from the last year of the war, when I often had to decipher the telegrams he was sending from Moscow to the Foreign Office. (It required some ingenuity to make sense of them, for they arrived full of errors—no doubt the Russian telegraphists were highly incompetent.) This young consular officer explained to the august Mr. Balfour the error of his ways with a reckless, not to say impertinent, candour which won my youthful heart. But evidently this was not the way to lay the foundations of success, and I heard little more of Mr. Lockhart till he published *Memoirs of a British Agent*. That admirable book had the ingredients which later brought deserved success to Mr. Vincent Sheean's *In Search of History* and Mr. Negley Farson's *Way of a Transgressor*—international politics, and portraits of famous men, laced with frank accounts of personal emotions and affairs of the heart. I think Mr. Lockhart was the first modern autobiographer to capture the great British public with the tale of his infidelity. This candour, which I so much admire, is of course only one of Mr. Lockhart's talents. He has lively gifts for narrative and portraiture, and his judgments on men and politics are extremely acute. His rather facile and schoolboyish romanticism is doubtless an additional asset: most of us like reading about the joys of night-life, however boring we may find it in practice; and Mr. Lockhart, who genuinely likes sitting up till dawn dancing and drinking champagne and listening to tsiganes and cabaret-singers, can give us in imagination what we fail to find in reality. Unluckily even he is beginning to find night-life wearing rather thin, and *Return to Malaya* is the work of a sadder, if a wiser, man. It lacks also the portraits of eminent personages which gave his previous books historical value. Lord Rosslyn is an inadequate substitute for Lenin and Trotsky, Masaryk and Benes. The only romantic incident is the meeting with Amai, the Malay girl Mr. Lockhart had stolen twenty-five years earlier and loved and been forced to abandon; and their meeting is not thrilling or tragic, but merely pathetic and quietly touching. Mr. Lockhart is a born romantic and has been working for years on an evening paper, but he has entirely resisted the temptation to exaggerate his emotions.

The chief value of *Return to Malaya* is in its thoughtful account of British and Dutch Imperialism faced with the growth of native nationalism and of Japanese ambitions. Mr. Lockhart found the



Some of the Research Laboratories.

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The work of the Research Institute of the Hospital (a school of the University of London) is well known and widely appreciated. Professor E. L. Kennaway, the Director of The Research Institute, and Professor J. W. Cook, Research Chemist, were awarded this year a prize for their outstanding achievement in cancer research by the Union Internationale Contre le Cancer which comprises the representatives of 45 Nations.

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British in Malaya less energetic and less individual than when he was young.

> Civil servants in Malaya to-day lack the self-reliance and readiness to take responsibility of their predecessors. . . . What seems to me the weakest point in the British Imperial armour is the fact that since the war the middle classes, who are the bulwark of the British colonial system, have accustomed themselves to a standard of luxury and ease which in the face of modern competition will be increasingly difficult to maintain. The standard of pleasure in Malaya is much higher than in the neighbouring French and Dutch colonies. . . .
>
> The decline of the Roman Empire began when civil servants of Rome started to suppress every symptom of energy, initiative and enterprise shown by the local administrators. The modern bureaucratic methods of Whitehall and the inability of the Home Government to select the right man and to leave well alone may have the same disastrous effects on the British Colonial Empire.

He deplores the increase in Malaya of the white women who live too often merely for bridge and dancing, and who clip the wings of the young men by too early marriage. Though himself almost aggressively unhighbrow, he comments on "that absence of intellectual interests which is a defective feature of British colonial life in tropical countries." He finds, though, that the Englishman has great assets "and the two greatest perhaps were his inability to see himself as others see him and his convenient lack of imagination." He concludes that "as a colonial empire we have reached an early middle-age rather too comfortable and complacent for our security, but still virile and far distant from senility."

He interviewed in Dutch territory a young nationalist prince, as well as a number of high Dutch officials (the Dutch rule, he found, was rather more severe than ours), and his book is full of question-marks about the future.

> Most experts, including many British, held the view that the French would go first, the British second, and the Dutch third. But my own firm impression was . . . the Dutch were in a weaker position than the British, if only because of their efficiency. Their colonial empire had reached a very high degree of development. It contained a far higher percentage of educated natives than did British Malaya, and education was the threshold to nationalism.

On the other side, he quotes the answer of a man "who knew the East as few men know it," when asked if he was in favour of returning to Germany her colonies, "I don't think it matters," he had said, "Self-determination is moving so fast that in twenty-five years' time it will make no difference who owns colonies."

I hope that I have quoted enough to show that this book is of the highest interest to everyone interested in Imperialism. It is also enormously readable, and can be confidently recommended to the ordinary reader who asks only to be entertained. It is, in fact, one of the best books of the year.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

AN ENEMY OF FRANCE

Baron Stein. By CONSTANTIN DE GRUNWALD. Trans. from the French by C. F. ATKINSON. *Cape.* 15*s*.

That history repeats itself is but a statement of the limitations of human temperament—of the depressing invariability with which nations and individuals make the same mistake about each other, over and over again. Thus the state of Germany in 1808 and in 1919–33 reveals itself, in the pages of this extremely intelligent book, as startlingly similar. Stein, the reforming minister of the unwilling Frederick William III., was doubtless not the first of his countrymen to dream of German unity; but he was certainly the first to possess the demonic energy necessary to start that ball rolling. Mr. de Grunwald subtitles his book *The Enemy of Napoleon;* but Stein's temperamental hatred of the French Revolution caused him to make the mistake common to many others of his time, *i.e.*, that of confusing Napoleon with the French nation. Hitler's hysterical fear of Russia was paralleled, in the last years of the eighteenth century, by the fear, held by most of Europe, that France would not be content to mind her own business. This fear, and the action in which it resulted, threw up Napoleon, who seduced and misled the spirit of France until men like Stein had perforce to consider that most peaceable and reasonable of nations as a predatory force. For it was fear, and the vacillating policy of Frederick William III, that landed Germany under the heel of Napoleon, whose levy on Prussia was so enormous as to result in the starvation and suicide of the people. At this point Stein came to the front and, like Stresemann a hundred and twenty years later, introduced a system of finessing to get the French out of Germany, by passively obstructing Count Daru's efforts to extract the levy. The correspondence of Stendhal, who was Daru's subordinate, shows this process at work, though M. de Grunwald acquits Stein of deliberate sabotage. It seems certain that Daru, who was a most acute man, perceived the contrary force that was being piled up by Napoleon's iniquitous demands; but the Emperor was, as this book points out, inveterately incapable of realising what the generality of any nation thought, because his own pettiness did not allow him to believe in disinterested feelings.

But it is as a reformer of the machinery of government that Stein deserves to be called great. He succeeded in abolishing serfdom; accomplished a considerable measure of agrarian reform (though the Prussian police remained a manorial institution until 1878 !); established the War Ministry on the French model; vastly improved the bureaucratic machinery; made the municipalities elective, which they remained until 1933; and, with the help of Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, remodelled the army and introduced conscription. But in spite of this imposing array of achievements there is a certain typically German nebulousness of aim and rigidity of principle, due mainly to his attempt to use the forms of the French Revolution while substituting for its humanitarian spirit a purely national one. In exile at Prague, Stein indulged in dreams of a Germany as mediaeval as even Dr. Goebbels could desire; and Stein saw his opportunity to realise them when that equivocal mystic, Alexander I, solicited his help against France. Napoleon's outburst of suspicious rage, on hearing of this alliance, gives the measure of his fear of Stein. But the ultimate failure of the Baron's grandiose projects was due to causes other than Napoleon's persecution: they foundered first on Frederick William's dislike, and secondly on Metternich's determination to keep Germany disunited. Thus Stein's efforts at the Congress of Vienna were in the end abortive, and he retired a disgruntled man. The only major criticism I have to make of this admirable and most readable book is that on the whole it overrates Stein's achievement: some of the administrative reforms attributed to him were really due to Heinrich von Schön and even to the king; while the singleness of aim and the immense energy of the man are apt to blind the writer to the fact that he was fundamentally as *bad* as Napoleon himself, *i.e.*, actuated by the larger selfishness which takes no

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'All ye who Christians be,
Oh, light my tiny candle here for me,
It has gone out: I am not very old,
And as I travelled in the cold
A bitter wind with all his might
Blew, and put out my little light.'

'All ye who Christians be,
Will ye not list to me,
Who have so often prayed
I might not be afraid?
I am a little frightened—can't you see?
Oh, light my little candle here for me.'
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account of that part of humanity which lies outside the boundaries of the nation. As Lord Acton said, "all great men are bad," and Stein's life and character seem to lack those dramatic qualities for the sake of which bad men have often won the forgiveness and even—so romantic is the human heart—the adoration of posterity.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

Sir Philip Sidney. By C. HENRY WARREN. *Nelson.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Warren is likely to be unique for all time among biographers in one respect: he has written a life of Sidney in which the name of Spenser is absent from the index. Admittedly the index is at fault, but even so its omission is slight. I have traced only four references in all to Spenser, and each is of the slenderest sort. Three can be ignored; the fourth stops at a mention of Sidney's apprenticeship as a poet "under Spenser." As this apprenticeship is not mentioned earlier in the book, it is surprising to have it referred to so casually; and the more so, since there is not another word throughout to suggest that Sidney and Spenser had even a nodding acquaintance with each other.

Mr. Warren is confessedly hampered by lack of extant information about Sidney and his circle, and yet he ignores the most distinguished and probably one of the most congenial of his earlier friends. Nothing is said of the time that Spenser lived at the Sidneys' home, Penshurst; and Spenser's dedication of *The Shepherd's Calendar* to Sidney is quoted from, but not indicated as such. Mr. Warren can hardly be uninformed of what is in every potted biography of either poet, and it is therefore the more difficult to discover why he should omit this relationship, presumably so fruitful to both men.

A similar uncertainty of touch appears in the references to Ludovick Bryskett. Intentionally or not, Mr. Warren presents Bryskett as an Italian gallant of no particular consequence, pining to return to his homeland; whereas Bryskett's family settled in England years before his birth, and he himself became Clerk of the Council of Munster (as did Spenser after him) and was one of the circle of Spenser's friends in Ireland. Mr. Warren cannot be accused of contradicting facts, but he is apt to lead us away from them.

Sidney himself is presented by Mr. Warren with evident sincerity and admiration, and yet he remains the shadowy wing-beating angel of romantic tradition. His public affairs languished perpetually and verge at times on opera bouffe; his admired honour was nourished on few notable deeds; his talents were largely wasted. Even his handsomeness is under question, although Mr. Warren omits Ben Jonson's "Sir Philip Sidney was no pleasant man in countenance, his face being spoiled with Pimples and of high blood and Long." The great reputation is in some way intangible, and Mr. Warren does little to make his hero's character less nebulous. A legend of chivalry, a certainty of potential accomplishments unrealised and a handful of poems remain. Mr. Warren offers a dignified homage to the traditional ghost, without discovering the particular Elizabethan gentleman who inspired it.

A. DESMOND HAWKINS

SHORTER NOTICES

The Motorist's Companion. JOHN PRIOLEAU. *Dent.* 7s. 6d.

The Motorist's Companion fulfils the same rôle for the motorist as the Week-end Book for the walker. It is a mixture of technical advice, travel lore and anecdote. Mr. Prioleau is a motoring enthusiast with ample experience not only of buying, driving and overhauling cars, but also of roads, inns and foods both in this country and on the continent. He applauds the advent of the modern roadside garage-cum-tavern-cum swimming pool, which, situated on a main road or by-pass, constitutes a lure for most of the evening traffic, leaving the lanes empty and unspoiled for connoisseurs like himself. He is inclined to disparage the English inn, although he apparently knows many—the names unfortunately are not revealed—where local specialities can be eaten; for example rook pie in Notts: snails, potted laver and lampreys in Somerset: and roast sucking pig in Middlesex. He is equally knowledgeable about conditions in the chief countries of Europe, where he gives pride of place to Spain for roads, to France for cooking, and to Germany for comfort. The book concludes with a glossary of technical terms in six languages; many of these are unfamiliar to the average incompetent motorist even in English.

Big Game Encounters: Critical Moments in the Lives of Well-known Shikaris. By STANLEY JEPSON. *Witherby.* 8s. 6d.

Here is your real thriller. Mr. Jepson has assembled a brave array of stories told by famous big game hunters of their hairbreadth escapes from the more dangerous creatures of the wild. Tiger stories predominate, not because the tiger is the most dangerous of animals but because it is more often hunted. Panther and bear, elephant and buffalo, however, play their part in these dramas of the wild. The book is well illustrated, and has in addition to the stories proper, a study of the wild in which the ways of the various animals are admirably described.

A Naval Wife Goes East. By EILEEN WALKER. *Blackwood.* 7s. 6d.
Ships and Women. By BILL ADAMS. *Peter Davies* and *Lovat Dickson.* 8s. 6d.

The "Naval Wife" makes no claims to literary pretensions and this is an obviously naive record of an eighteen months' stay out East. Except for Tomato-face, one of her husband's Chinese servants, she disliked the Chinese. She shuddered when the Chinese coolie dipped his hand into her bath-water to see that it was exactly right, and she could never feel quite clean washing in water so polluted. She liked the lunch in Hong-Kong, and . . . why go on? But out of sheer curiosity one reads on to the end. And the authoress has her public, as notices about her two previous books show.

Altogether more a man's book, full of apostrophised words, is *Ships and Women.* The women are Katie Jacobs in Buenos Ayres, Liverpool Liz in Portland, Oregon, and "them coolie gals in Calcutta." However there is more about ships and ports than about women. And the first chapters in which Mr. Adams gives us glimpses of his father, a Legionnaire, of his invalid mother, of his aunt and of his Warwickshire village, are vividly written. This is the sort of book that the kindest review could not help misrepresenting. It should be read, and the reading is all pleasure. And if ever the vicar should feel hurt that the sailors who put in to port do not attend his services, this excuse which the author returning from his first voyage gave his aunt is as good as another: "When a sailor comes ashore, the first thing that he does, he takes a dose of Epsom salts to get the salt food out of his system." Which is why he must miss the Sunday morning's service.

J. T. Grein: The Story of a Pioneer, 1862-1935. By HIS WIFE (MICHAEL ORME). *Murray.* 10s. 6d.

Towards the close of this biographical memoir of her distinguished husband Mrs. Grein tells us that it has been said of him that he had no enemies, but that that is not true. Mrs. Grein is right. Though it will be difficult for those who do not remember battles long ago and who knew J. T. only in the Indian Summer of his last years to understand

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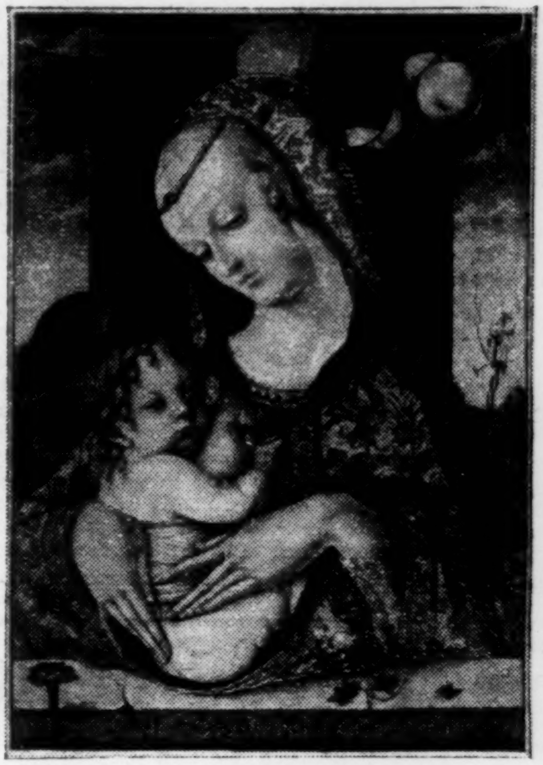

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how so generous, kindly, and courteous a man could ever have excited the antipathy of anyone. As Mr. Conal O'Riordan says in the foreword he contributes, Grein came as a simple man who did things into a crowd of subtle men who talked and scribbled and scribbled and talked without producing any effect whatever except more talk and more scribbling. Grein who came into the Victorian theatre and, innocent of offence, flouted all its taboos, letting loose upon a squeamish world Ibsen and his shoots, Shaw and his skeletons. To our Pirandellesque Puritans who held that if you did not think of things they did not exist this was anathema and the battle was joined. Mrs. Grein's story of the Independent Theatre explains how fierce the battle was, and also makes it clear that nothing she claims for her husband may be denied him. If he was not the only begettor, he was at any rate the most effective begettor of all that is best in our theatre to-day and his memory will endure.

Stalking in the Himalayas and Northern India. By Lt.-Col. C. H. STOCKLEY. *Jenkins.* 15*s.*

In this practical, informative, and entertaining study of the theory, practice, and ethics of stalking, the form of big-game hunting that Colonel Stockley exalts above all others, the neophyte is given just the information he needs, and every young sportsman going out to India may be advised to pack the book with his guns and camera. Colonel Stockley describes the various beasts to be stalked, their habits, the localities where they are to be found, and the methods to be adopted. He also explains the heads that may be taken, the size varying with the locality, and, denouncing indiscriminate slaughter and mere pot hunting, goes so far as to advise the camera in preference to the gun. No doubt this will prove a counsel of perfection, to be heeded only when honourable trophies have been secured. There are many illustrations, including photographs of Ovis Ammon, Marklion, Ibex, and Oorial. There are full descriptions of equipment, and some useful notes on cooking.

The Economics of Primitive Peoples. By STEPHAN VILJOEN. *King.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This study of the economics of primitive people demonstrates how profoundly "earning their living" has affected men's thoughts and actions through the ages. Dr. Viljoen never strays far or for long from the economic field, yet when all is said that he has to say there is little in the life of the primitive that has not been laid bare. Much of the ground covered has been covered by other writers as the appended bibliography bears witness, nor does Dr. Viljoen claim any originality of research; but throughout the book we are in touch with an alert, informed, and original mind, sifting and correlating the garnered evidence, and weighing hypothesis against hypothesis with a judicial calm that disregards the warring factions of "ists" and "isms." Of real value to students of anthropology, the book is so agreeably written that it should win many recruits to the properest of studies, for no more interesting introduction to its subject, which is civilised man in the making, has been published.

Bred in the Blue, or, Ways of the African Wildfolk. By W. S. CHADWICK. *Melrose.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Chadwick's stories of the African veld or forest as seen by a hunter who is also something of a naturalist, are always noticeable for the gusto with which they are told and for the happy knack he has of telling an animal's story from the animal's point of view while keeping the animal in his place. In this essay he deals with the adventures of an Alsatian dog trained to big-game hunting, the best story told being that of an interlude in the dog's life when, fleeing from a stupid and brutal master, he lived for a time in the wild and made some strange friends. There is one curious yarn in the book in which the hunting of leopard-men is described, the first time, one imagines, that this mischievous and dangerous sect has been placed among big game. The illustrations from drawings are spirited and effective.

The Lonsdale Library. Vol. XXI. Polo. 25*s.* **Vol. XXII. Deer, Hare and Otter Hunting.** *Seeley Service.* 15*s.*

The twenty-first volume of the Lonsdale Library deals with Polo, the twenty-second with Deer, Hare and Otter Hunting. Both are technical works, the products of the collaboration of a number of experts. The greater part of the polo book is written by soldiers, and one cannot help feeling that, if the same concentration and enthusiasm devoted to polo had been applied to military strategy and tactics, our blunders in the Great War would have been less frequent. The book covers all the ramifications of the game, in addition to such ancillary subjects as buying, training, bitting, and feeding ponies. The greater part of the hunting volume is devoted to otter hunting, and hunting the hare with beagles, basset hounds, or harriers. These forms of sport are cheaper, and therefore more democratic, than fox-hunting, and they afford better opportunities of observing the niceties of houndwork. Humanitarians, however, can have little sympathy with hare or otter hunting, nor will they approve of the chapters devoted to deer-hunting in the New Forest, stag-hunting on Exmoor, and hunting the carted stag. They will prefer the chapter on that excellent form of bloodless sport, drag-hunting, in which hounds follow a scent provided by aniseed or fox's urine trailed in a bag. Of unusual interest are the pages describing the little known sport of stoat-hunting with specially trained beagles. No sympathy need be felt for this bloodthirsty little animal, an equal menace to gamekeepers and poultry farmers. "The trophy in Stoat-Hunting is the black-tipped tail, which, when cured, can be worn in a hat-band."

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ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT'

Week-end Competitions

No. 351

Set by Roger Marvell

The usual prizes are offered for a poem of fourteen lines (or less) suggested by the burning of the Crystal Palace. Comic poems are not absolutely excluded, but competitors are warned that the setter regards the fire with unmixed feelings of distress.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, December 11.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

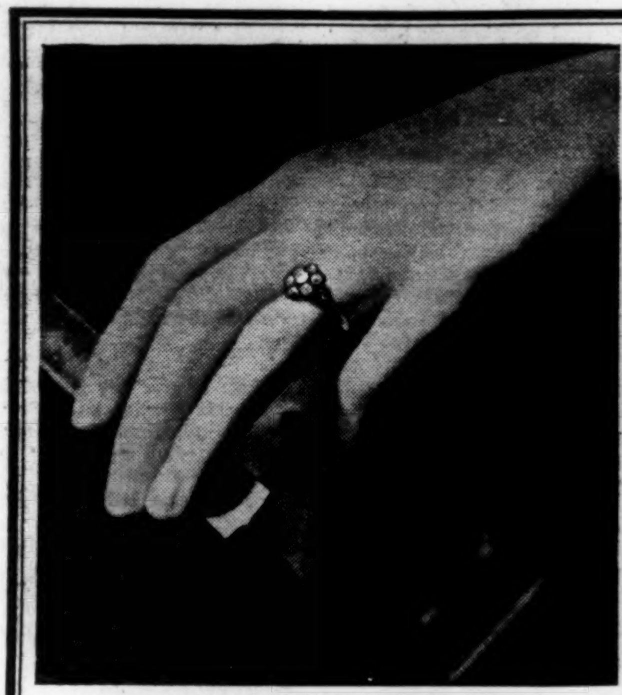
RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 349

Set by Raymond Mortimer

This competition is taken from the paper game "Telegrams." You are requested to compose three telegraphic messages, each of twelve words, which begin respectively with the twelve letters N, E, W, S, T, A, T, E, S, M, A, N, in this order. The messages are:

1. To make a proposal of marriage.
2. To condole with a friend (on any subject).
3. To warn someone to escape arrest by immediately leaving the country.

We offer the usual prizes for the best entries.



'THE ENGAGEMENT IS ANNOUNCED . . .'

and the planning begins. Is the dining room to be blue or cream? What about yellow and green for the lounge? But, first of all where are they going to live? In a home that is really their own? Or are they going to begin paying irksome rent? . . . The Abbey Road is anxious that all engaged couples should be able to begin their married lives on the sound basis of home ownership. Ample funds are available to help them to make a home that is really their own, and it is a comforting thought that the Abbey Road service costs no more than the ordinary service.

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Report by Raymond Mortimer

This competition drew almost a record number of entries, no doubt because it seemed easy. Most of the results, however, suggest that in fact it was exceedingly difficult. (I am surprised that no competitor took refuge, as I have often done when playing this game, in French.) In style two alternatives were available—telegraphese such as most of us descend to, or ordinary English such as some people use who do not care to save pennies. Many competitors disqualified themselves by mixing these two styles most improbably. Still more put themselves out of the running by referring in the third telegram to 'tecs and warrants and ending " shave moustache alter name." I presume that there is at least some faint *liaison* between the post office and the police; and I trust that when I am " wanted," the friend who sends me a warning telegram will have the intelligence to be cryptic. The proposal of marriage was most convincing in the hands of those competitors who suggested, again cryptically, that a forthcoming happy event made a wedding urgent. K. S. Verdad produced a model—indeed a positive short story and the best single message submitted; " no excuse writing so torridly am trying eagerly solicit marriage anxiety natural " I also liked Ronald Lambton's " no escaping wedding soon treasure alternative to endure scandal misery abortion nigeria." David Daiches, Heraclitus, J. G. R. and Guy Innes also did well.

The message of condolence was all too usually directed by the T in Statesman to the subject of triplets. There were some pleasant telegrams condoling upon failure in a Week-end Competition; M. A. Pyke's " nation editor weak spineless timeserving amoeba think entry surrealist manner admirable nosworthy " and Arnold Hyde's " no editor will stand that advise telling editor statesman mortimer arrant nincompoop." Adrian Stokes won my heart with " nothing ever worse scandalous tribulation apology too easy sue martin and newstaggers." I also liked Apemantus's " news expulsion willie shameful try action threat exceedingly sorry masters attitude nonsensical " and best of all, Elizabeth Barrett's " now examined will sorry tell alfred, total estate myself and mary." Giroflee, D. C. H. Wychwood, Enid Fordham and Miss Astley were all good.

Quite a number of competitors were ingenious in warning: Little Billee, for instance, " newsreel emanating whitehall so thrilling arresting that european soundless movie action necessary " and Bantam's " not enjoyable weather should take air trip east suez medical adviser nervous " and B. H. M.'s " never eat worms stupid things advise thorough estrangement swiss mountains always nice." C. O. L. Coburn, Adele, R. D. C., Heraclitus and Tirzah also sent good warnings. A high level for all three messages was reached by J. R. A. H., Douglas Harding, P. S. T., and Tor. I recommend for first prize (though I expect to be accused of favouritism as he is a contributor to this journal) John Hayward. He is the competitor who in style and matter has most nearly brought off all three telegrams. (I do not, however, believe that anyone however agitated would waste a copper on spelling scoutmaster as two words). For second prize I recommend Charles Lloyd-James, though I do not approve (or perhaps do not understand) the epithet " slimey " and also think the third message inadequately cryptic.

FIRST PRIZE

1. never expected wonderful surprise this afternoon thrilling experience sugges' marriage announcement newspapers
2. notwithstanding evidence warrant sympathise truly arrest trust eccentric scout masters allegations nonsense
3. nursemaids evidently worried significance trip argentine travel east safest method avoid nemesis JOHN HAYWARD

SECOND PRIZE

1. nerts emphatically wont sin tory ancestors threaten excommunication slimey marriage absolutely necessary
2. nitwit electorate wouldn't stand there again telling everyone simply means agent negligent
3. news extremely wormwood scrubby try autumn trip ecuador send me allowance naturally CHARLES LLOYD-JAMES

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 205.—MINA WAS A MEANIE

Mina, our office telephonist, is a meanie. She's supposed to arrange our dates for us—there are seven of us in the invoice department—but last Saturday somebody offended her and she deliberately made a mess of the whole thing. She was supposed to find out from our various girls where each of them wanted to be met. And what did she do? She arranged that each of us met somebody else's girl, and at a second girl's rendezvous—having, I suppose, told each of the girls that the place *she'd* selected wouldn't do.

Charlie, for instance, was sent to the Palladium—the rendezvous appointed by Bert's girl, Monica—and there he met my girl, Clara. Eddie's girl—Bimbo, we call her—met Fred in Hammersmith Broadway; that was actually Lorna's rendezvous. Eddie himself went to the Corner House, which was Stella's rendezvous (she's Fred's girl) and Lorna, who is Charlie's selection, turned up there. And George went to Swan and Edgar's, which was Bimbo's idea, and had the doubtful pleasure of meeting Stella.

As for me—Alfred, my name is—I duly showed up at the Tivoli—the rendezvous selected by Eileen, who is George's girl. *Whom do you suppose I met there? And where did Bert and Dick go, and whom did they respectively meet?*

N.B.—Dick's girl is called Elfie, and her rendezvous was the Marble Arch. My girl's rendezvous was the Plaza.

PROBLEM 203.—SIX GOLFERS

The four bogey scores are

1st hole	5
2nd hole	3
3rd hole	4
4th hole	5

The problem involves a certain amount of trial since there are 16 possibilities to consider and, at each, six possible arrangements of the relevant scores. But the work ought not to take nearly as long as some solvers claim. Having hit upon the idea of the problem, it took me about half an hour to explore its ramifications.

It was not really necessary—as several solvers point out—to state that the four " bogeys " totalled 17.

PROBLEM 202.—CROME TERRACE

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: Miss W. M. Dyke, 162 Coppice Street, Oldham, Lancs.

Seven points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

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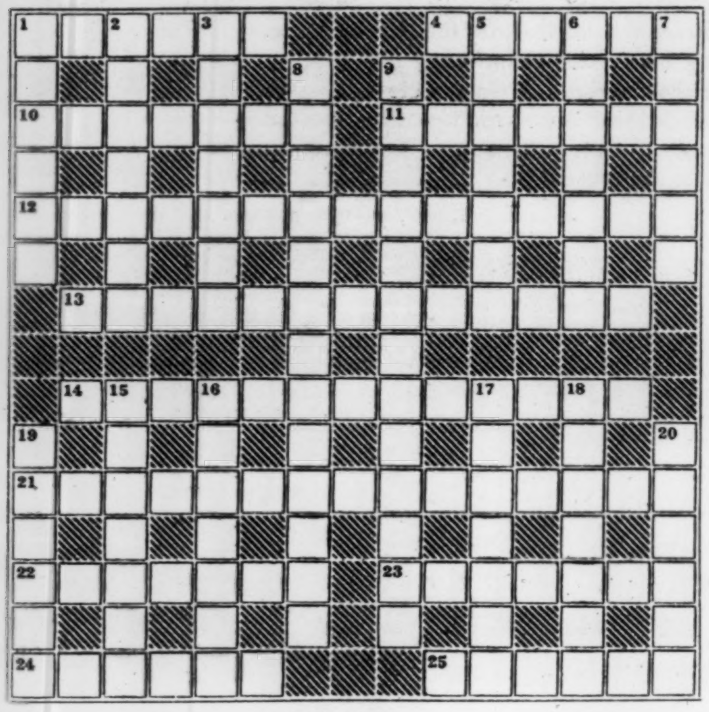
WEEK-END CROSSWORD 352

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Miss M. A. Cashin, 44 Swaledale Road, Millhouses, Sheffield, 7.

ACROSS.

1. Body of troops that is always appearing in the Press.

4. One result of cutting capers.

10. Scene of quiet burial.

11. A good-looking person could presumably never have this.

12. Its capitally moving job is popular.

13. Result of the whole nation hopping it?

14. Wrinkles that one picks up in the wedded state no doubt.

21. An old tale of blond children?

22. Caviare is enough to make one greedy.

23. They are very skilful—at putting things together.

24. How films are shown off.

25. Venus got a good belting with it.

DOWN.

1. One might get fed up with this boat.
2. Playfully eloped with a Jewess.
3. Before long to a Scotsman.
5. Hide your blushes when they find your neighbour's talc rims on your glasses.
6. No doubt the blooming thing likes to have the wind up.
7. Result of a crossing in trees.
8. The sailor would not wish the sea to rise to this rank of ability.
9. Necessary equipment for a good lie.
15. One gets a neat aim with it.
16. The L.N.E.R. disorganised by ice.
17. How owners may rebuild castles wrecked in Spain?
18. Concealed choir sang anthem in entirety.
19. Business that involves the R.A.F. and an auctioneer.
20. This enables the limpet to stick it.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

P	A	L	P	I	T	A	T	E	D	■	E	S	P	Y
U	■	O	■	L	■	L	■	E	■	E	■	P	■	A
B	U	B	B	L	E	A	N	D	S	Q	U	E	A	K
L	■	L	■	S	■	M	■	N	■	U	■	C	■	S
I	B	I	S	■	M	E	N	A	G	E	R	I	E	■
S	■	E	■	D	■	D	■	R	■	R	■	A	■	E
H	O	B	B	E	M	A	■	G	O	R	I	L	L	A
E	■	Y	■	R	■	■	■	■	■	I	■	T	■	S
R	E	T	I	R	E	D	■	Q	U	E	E	R	L	Y
S	■	H	■	Y	■	E	■	U	■	S	■	A	■	S
■	M	E	N	D	E	L	I	A	N	■	M	I	N	T
T	■	F	■	O	■	A	■	R	■	U	■	N	■	A
R	A	I	L	W	A	Y	C	R	O	S	S	I	N	G
I	■	R	■	N	■	E	■	E	■	E	■	N	■	E
P	I	E	D	■	A	D	D	L	E	D	E	G	G	S

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE BOLT FROM THE ROYAL BLUE—SKEFKO AND CRABTREE ISSUES

OUT of the royal blue came the political bolt—on Wednesday—which shattered the peace of the stock markets. In the gilt-edged market 3½ per cent. War Loan led the decline by dropping a point and a half. In the industrial markets most of the domestic leaders reacted sharply; Unilever, an international, dropped from 40*s.* to 38*s.* 9*d.*; Mexican Eagle, star of the speculators, sank from 29*s.* to 27*s.* 6*d.* So it went on. Anxious clients rang up their brokers to ascertain whether the European War had been declared. The Stock Exchange takes a domestic dispute between King and Ministers more seriously than a dangerous civil war in Spain, particularly if it believes that a "safe" Prime Minister might feel called upon to resign. Nevertheless, investors would be wise not to throw good stocks away. The economic values of the wealth which is dealt in on the Stock Exchange are the same after as before a Constitutional crisis. If security prices have been marked down sharply it is partly because the stock markets were due for a reaction in any event. The rise in industrial shares has been steep, and has been sustained from the end of May almost to the end of November. It was bound sooner or later to be followed by a period of irregularity. As I explained last week, there were some large "bull" accounts outstanding and the combination of international and domestic bad news will force the pace of liquidation. Besides, it is the last account of the year.

* * *

In the midst of the crisis a "placing" was made of 1,100,000 Skefko Ball Bearing Company 5*s.* shares at 37*s.* 6*d.*, and on Wednesday when the market opened investors were able to acquire their holdings at cheaper prices—around 40*s.* The equity of this British part of the Swedish-owned international S.K.F. has not hitherto been available to the British public, but the Swedes, while maintaining the same technical co-operation, are now parting with control. The rise in gross profits has been rapid: 1934, £145,000; 1935, £196,500; and, in the first nine months of 1936, £231,000. It will be seen that about 45 per cent. net should be earned on the £500,000 ordinary capital this year and it is anticipated that a final dividend of 20 per cent. tax free will be paid, making 30 per cent. tax free for the year. At 38*s.* 6*d.* the dividend yield would be £5 2*s.* 3*d.* per cent. gross and at 40*s.* 6*d.* £4 17*s.* 0*d.* per cent. gross. This compares well with the other ball-bearing shares:

	Price.	Last Earnings %.	Last Dividend %.	Yield % on Earnings.	Yield % on Dividends.
Hoffmann Manufacturing £1.	6¼	22 net	15 net	£4 7*s.* 0*d.*	£3 19*s.* 3*d.* on 20% est. (interim raised from 4% to 6%)
Ransome and Marles £1.	84*s.*	30.6	15	£7 5*s.* 9*d.*	£3 11*s.* 6*d.*

The Ransome & Marles financial year ended on June 30: Hoffmann's ends on Dec. 31.

There is, however, one point to bear in mind. The ratio of profit in this industry is high and competition can increase. I hear that a German firm is building a new ball-bearing factory in that paradise of industrial enterprise, the Great West Road. In a year or two this may mean price-cutting. I do not expect the Swedes would have sold their Skefko shares to the British public if they were not very satisfied with the price.

* * *

When a Stock Exchange "introduction" has been followed by a meteoric rise in price and by cries of discontent from unsatisfied buyers, one often hears the remark that a public offer for sale would have been a fairer way of "letting the public in." But the offer for sale can also cause heartburnings. For example, Crabtree Electrical Industries issued this week 350,000 5 per cent. preference shares of £1 at 20*s.* 6*d.* and 840,000 ordinary shares of 10*s.* at 12*s.* 9*d.* and gave figures for the year ending July, 1936, indicating that the preference share dividend was covered 8½ times and that the ordinary shares had earned 22 per cent. To offer the public the equity of a prosperous electrical equipment manufacturer on a 17 per cent. earnings yield basis was a rare and remarkable event, but in the smallest type under the offer of 840,000 10*s.* ordinary shares at 12*s.* 9*d.* it was disclosed that 400,000 shares had been applied for by one firm and would be allotted in full. It is small wonder that the ordinary share issue was about seventy times over-subscribed. If the public can acquire these shares at a price under 17*s.* 6*d.* at the market opening it will be lucky. Such offers for sale might be advertised as private placings.

* * *

My *Statistical Assistant* writes:—Not many changes are expected in the December dividend announcements of the South African gold producing companies. The kings of the market—Crowns and Sub Nigel—could increase their last half-yearly 9*s.* by 3*d.*, if they would deign to do so, and Robinson Deep could add the same amount to their 2*s.* Consolidated Main Reef may be forced to reduce its dividend temporarily by 6*d.*, but I regard these shares as among the steadiest of the long-term investments. in gold. The following table gives the current market prices and yields on the basis of gross and estimated dividends:—

	Present Price.	Dividends. June.	Dividends. Est. for Dec.	Yield % at Double Dec. Rate.*	Estimated Life (Years).
Brakpan	2¾	1/4½	1/4½	£5 13 6	40
Crown Mines ..	15¾	9/-	9/3	6 15 0	40
Consol. Main Reef ..	4 23/32	3/6	3/-	6 19 9	35
Geduld	10 13/16	7/6	7/6	7 17 6	15
Randfontein	78/6	2/6	2/6	7 8 9	40
Robinson Deep B ..	3 1/16	2/-	2/3	8 6 3	25
Springs	2 3/16	1/2¼	1/2¼	6 3 9	25
Sub Nigel	13 1/16	9/-	9/3	8 0 9	40

* Allowing for Dominion Income Tax relief.

If gold shares are to be recommended at all, Robinson Deep B appear attractive on the estimated dividend yield.

Toreador:—If the gold producers could look forward to nothing but a stabilised price for gold and a rising cost of materials and wages their equity shares would hold no attractions at all. But they have not quite reached this point. The present stabilisation of the gold price is only experimental—like all gentlemen's agreements—and as long as Mr. Roosevelt retains his right to devalue the dollar further, or as long as sterling remains vulnerable to a flight of capital abroad, the possibility of a further rise in the sterling price of gold cannot be ignored. Nor can the possibility of a fall if Mr. Roosevelt toys with the idea of checking the influx of foreign capital into America by refusing to buy gold.

* * *

Statistical Assistant:—I know that some investors, feeling that gold has lost its speculative attraction to the base metals, have exchanged from the South African gold producers' to the finance houses which give an interest in copper, diamonds, etc., as well as in gold. Here are the current prices and yields on estimated dividends:—

		Last Div.	Est. Div.	Yield % on Est. Div *
Johannesburg Cons. Invest. £1	87/6	20	20	£4 18 0
Anglo-American Corpn. 10/- ..	3 17/32	20	30	4 14 6
Consol. Goldfields S.A. £1 ..	5	20	20	4 4 0
Union Corpn. 12/6	9 7/16	64	64	4 8 3

* Equiv. gross after allowing for Dominion Income Tax relief.

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* * *

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Great Britain ..	$780,204,000	Italy	$28,714,000
France ..	$201,940,000	Netherlands ..	$194,962,000
Germany ..	$73,868,000	Switzerland ..	$297,630,000

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INVESTORS
Flexible Trust
Certificates

STUDY THESE IMPORTANT POINTS:—

The funds of the Trust are spread over a wide range of first-class industrial, commercial, banking, insurance, and other stocks and shares, selected from the issues of a permitted list of over 250 companies.

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From the outset you secure an income yield estimated at over 4½ per cent., calculated on the basis of the cash dividends paid on the underlying securities in the past year. Any capital bonuses, new issue rights, etc., declared are accumulated in the Trust and accrue to the benefit of Certificate holders.

As it is the policy of the Managers to invest a substantial portion of the Trust funds in expanding industries, investors have prospects of capital appreciation and increased income yields over a long-term period.

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FOR SECURITY : STABILITY : STRENGTH : A "15 MOORGATE" TRUST

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE BOLT FROM THE ROYAL BLUE—SKEFKO AND CRABTREE ISSUES

OUT of the royal blue came the political bolt—on Wednesday—which shattered the peace of the stock markets. In the gilt-edged market 3½ per cent. War Loan led the decline by dropping a point and a half. In the industrial markets most of the domestic leaders reacted sharply; Unilever, an international, dropped from 40*s.* to 38*s.* 9*d.*; Mexican Eagle, star of the speculators, sank from 29*s.* to 27*s.* 6*d.* So it went on. Anxious clients rang up their brokers to ascertain whether the European War had been declared. The Stock Exchange takes a domestic dispute between King and Ministers more seriously than a dangerous civil war in Spain, particularly if it believes that a "safe" Prime Minister might feel called upon to resign. Nevertheless, investors would be wise not to throw good stocks away. The economic values of the wealth which is dealt in on the Stock Exchange are the same after as before a Constitutional crisis. If security prices have been marked down sharply it is partly because the stock markets were due for a reaction in any event. The rise in industrial shares has been steep, and has been sustained from the end of May almost to the end of November. It was bound sooner or later to be followed by a period of irregularity. As I explained last week, there were some large "bull" accounts outstanding and the combination of international and domestic bad news will force the pace of liquidation. Besides, it is the last account of the year.

* * *

In the midst of the crisis a "placing" was made of 1,100,000 Skefko Ball Bearing Company 5*s.* shares at 37*s.* 6*d.*, and on Wednesday when the market opened investors were able to acquire their holdings at cheaper prices—around 40*s.* The equity of this British part of the Swedish-owned international S.K.F. has not hitherto been available to the British public, but the Swedes, while maintaining the same technical co-operation, are now parting with control. The rise in gross profits has been rapid: 1934, £145,000; 1935, £196,500; and, in the first nine months of 1936, £231,000. It will be seen that about 45 per cent. net should be earned on the £500,000 ordinary capital this year and it is anticipated that a final dividend of 20 per cent. tax free will be paid, making 30 per cent. tax free for the year. At 38*s.* 6*d.* the dividend yield would be £5 2*s.* 3*d.* per cent. gross and at 40*s.* 6*d.* £4 17*s.* 0*d.* per cent. gross. This compares well with the other ball-bearing shares:

	Price.	Last Earnings %.	Last Dividend %.	Yield % on Earnings.	Yield % on Dividends.
Hoffmann Manufacturing £1.	6¾	22 net	15 net	£4 7*s.* 0*d.*	£3 19*s.* 3*d.* on 20% est. (interim raised from 4% to 6%)
Ransome and Marles £1.	84*s.*	30.6	15	£7 5*s.* 9*d.*	£3 11*s.* 6*d.*

The Ransome & Marles financial year ended on June 30: Hoffmann's ends on Dec. 31.

There is, however, one point to bear in mind. The ratio of profit in this industry is high and competition can increase. I hear that a German firm is building a new ball-bearing factory in that paradise of industrial enterprise, the Great West Road. In a year or two this may mean price-cutting. I do not expect the Swedes would have sold their Skefko shares to the British public if they were not very satisfied with the price.

* * *

When a Stock Exchange "introduction" has been followed by a meteoric rise in price and by cries of discontent from unsatisfied buyers, one often hears the remark that a public offer for sale would have been a fairer way of "letting the public in." But the offer for sale can also cause heartburnings. For example, Crabtree Electrical Industries issued this week 350,000 5 per cent. preference shares of £1 at 20*s.* 6*d.* and 840,000 ordinary shares of 10*s.* at 12*s.* 9*d.* and gave figures for the year ending July, 1936, indicating that the preference share dividend was covered 8½ times and that the ordinary shares had earned 22 per cent. To offer the public the equity of a prosperous electrical equipment manufacturer on a 17 per cent. earnings yield basis was a rare and remarkable event, but in the smallest type under the offer of 840,000 10*s.* ordinary shares at 12*s.* 9*d.* it was disclosed that 400,000 shares had been applied for by one firm and would be allotted in full. It is small wonder that the ordinary share issue was about seventy times over-subscribed. If the public can acquire these shares at a price under 17*s.* 6*d.* at the market opening it will be lucky. Such offers for sale might be advertised as private placings.

* * *

My *Statistical Assistant* writes:—Not many changes are expected in the December dividend announcements of the South African gold producing companies. The kings of the market—Crowns and Sub Nigel—could increase their last half-yearly 9*s.* by 3*d.*, if they would deign to do so, and Robinson Deep could add the same amount to their 2*s.* Consolidated Main Reef may be forced to reduce its dividend temporarily by 6*d.*, but I regard these shares as among the steadiest of the long-term investments. in gold. The following table gives the current market prices and yields on the basis of gross and estimated dividends:—

	Present Price.	Dividends. June.	Dividends. Est. for Dec.	Yield % at Double Dec. Rate.*	Estimated Life (Years).
Brakpan	2¾	1/4½	1/4½	£5 13 6	40
Crown Mines ..	15¾	9/-	9/3	6 15 0	40
Consol. Main Reef ..	4 23/32	3/6	3/-	6 19 9	35
Geduld	10 13/16	7/6	7/6	7 17 6	15
Randfontein	78/6	2/6	2/6	7 8 9	40
Robinson Deep B ..	3 1/16	2/-	2/3	8 6 3	25
Springs	2 3/16	1/2¼	1/2¼	6 3 9	25
Sub Nigel	13 1/16	9/-	9/3	8 0 9	40

* Allowing for Dominion Income Tax relief.

If gold shares are to be recommended at all, Robinson Deep B appear attractive on the estimated dividend yield.

Toreador:—If the gold producers could look forward to nothing but a stabilised price for gold and a rising cost of materials and wages their equity shares would hold no attractions at all. But they have not quite reached this point. The present stabilisation of the gold price is only experimental—like all gentlemen's agreements—and as long as Mr. Roosevelt retains his right to devalue the dollar further, or as long as sterling remains vulnerable to a flight of capital abroad, the possibility of a further rise in the sterling price of gold cannot be ignored. Nor can the possibility of a fall if Mr. Roosevelt toys with the idea of checking the influx of foreign capital into America by refusing to buy gold.

* * *

Statistical Assistant:—I know that some investors, feeling that gold has lost its speculative attraction to the base metals, have exchanged from the South African gold producers' to the finance houses which give an interest in copper, diamonds, etc., as well as in gold. Here are the current prices and yields on estimated dividends:—

		Last Div.	Est. Div.	Yield % on Est. Div *
Johannesburg Cons. Invest. £1	87/6	20	20	£4 18 0
Anglo-American Corpn. 10/- ..	3 17/32	20	30	4 14 6
Consol. Goldfields S.A. £1 ..	5	20	20	4 4 0
Union Corpn. 12/6	9 7/16	64	64	4 8 3

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BRITISH EMPIRE CANCER CAMPAIGN

PATRON: H.M. THE KING.
President: H.R.H. The Duke of York, K.G.

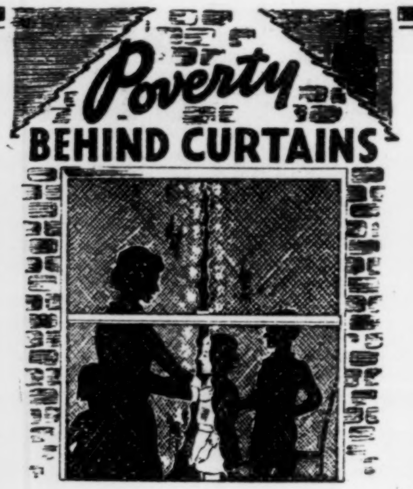
H.R.H. THE DUKE OF YORK speaking at the Annual General Meeting said:—

" I am glad to think that not only at home, but throughout the Empire, the interest in this great fight for humanity continues to receive more and more support from everyone."

The majority of the leading Institutions in Great Britain engaged in Cancer Research receive financial help from the British Empire Cancer Campaign.

Donations are urgently needed to carry on this war against Cancer. Please send a donation to-day to the

Hon. Treasurer, British Empire Cancer Campaign
12, GROSVENOR CRESCENT, LONDON, S.W.1



Christmas Day . . . no cheery glow from the hearth—no well-spread table to gladden the heart. BEHIND CURTAINS many poor families will go without, unless you help. 10/- parcel cheers one family. £5 provides for TEN families.

Please make it a Merry Christmas by your gift. PREB. CARLILE, C.H., D.D., 55 Bryanston St., London, W.1

CHURCH ARMY

"WHAT I SPENT I HAD
WHAT I SAVED I HAD
WHAT I GAVE I HAVE"

WE are apt to talk rather lightly, in the comfort of our homes, of the impact of modern conditions, economic and otherwise, upon our lives. To literally hundreds of thousands of people this self same impact when it comes simply shatters their frail structure whether it be family, home or health. A number of efficiently run organisations afford some defence against the ruthlessness of circumstances and in many cases they are able to give the victims a fresh start, and always new hope. A donation from you to such organisations as are appealing for funds in this issue will bring you the knowledge that this Christmas some of the ordinary material comforts of life, so common in our own homes as to be regarded as necessities, will be available, even if only for a short time, to those who have been less lucky than ourselves.

THE CHURCH ARMY

Issuing his annual appeal for subscriptions this Christmas, the venerable founder of the Church Army especially stresses the festal side of the season, and asks particularly for help towards the provision of the Christmas Parcels which the Army distributes to the poor. At a time when so many of us are wondering what present to give to this or other of our friends, it is well that we should learn that there are thousands of families to whom the gift of an Army parcel, costing but ten shillings, will mean " all the difference between a happy Christmas and one that is a mere mockery of the spirit of the greatest of all festivals." Five pounds then will make ten families happy ! Though it is the desire of the Army that as many of these parcels as is possible shall be distributed, Christmas means, of course, an increase of expenditure throughout all the Army's institutions. For every meal must have at least the semblance of a feast. And, be it remembered, that if the Army helps every man once, it is those who do their best to help themselves that it continues to foster. Hence its Institutions and hostels are full of those who have every claim upon us, and none a greater claim than the boys on tramp who are taken into the hostels which have been established on the outskirts of London, where they are sheltered from the evil of the streets and found employment. Donations will be welcomed by Prebendary Carlile, at Church Army Headquarters, 55 Bryanston Street, London, W.1.

ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION

Never in any previous year have so many of us been able to gauge imaginatively the value of the service rendered by the Royal National Life-Boat Institution. During the great gales of this year many thousands of people have known personally the fury of wind and wave when both are at their height. Moreover the national interest in the *Queen Mary* has taught millions of us that even the leviathans among ships do not come quite scatheless from the major storms. And if the *Queen Mary* feels the buffet what must be the lot of the little ship battered, and broken, and drifting at the mercy of wave, and tide, and current, till she strands and is a wreck. To those waiting on the decks and sending signals, what must it mean when those signals are answered and a lifeboat is launched to the rescue ? With such thoughts in mind how could one resist the annual appeal of this beneficent and heroic

Help Mummie to get well again

The Hospital serves a million poor in North London and there are very many mothers among the patients whose families anxiously await their return.

PLEASE HELP US THIS CHRISTMASTIDE FOR THEIR SAKE!

Everywhere in this district there is poverty, hardship and suffering, but very little money.

ROYAL NORTHERN HOSPITAL
HOLLOWAY, N.7
Send a gift now to the Rt. Hon. SIR PHILIP SASSOON, Bart., M.P., Hon. Treasurer.

Institution, which during the year has already been the means of saving 461 lives, has made 418 launches in that fleet of 268 boats, 131 of which are motor-driven and the rest in steady course of conversion. The quarter of a million pounds sterling that is expended annually upon this service, would be met if every man, woman and child subscribed a penny. So who can grudge his quota, and as much over it as he can spare. Donations should be sent to the Secretary of the Institution, 42 Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1.

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

When this valuable Society was founded over half a century ago its procedure for a long time was the prosecution of parents and guardians guilty of the crimes against children which had shocked the public conscience. To-day, though there is still cruelty to be stopped and neglect to be remedied, so admirably has the work of the Society been carried out by its army of paid and voluntary workers, that but one per cent. of the cases brought to its notice involve prosecution. With public opinion firmly at its back, its warnings are heeded; and so widely known and so highly esteemed have the activities of the Society become that every year thousands of parents voluntarily appeal to it for advice in the upbringing and management of children. But, if prosecutions are few, warnings are many, and were the vigilance of the Society relaxed we might soon be back again to the conditions existing when it was first founded. Last year 45,658 cases were dealt with concerning 113,034 children. In nearly nine hundred cases the parents sought advice in the interests of their children. And only 466 cases ended in prosecution. In a day when we see so many happy children it is difficult to believe that hidden from our eyes there are tens of thousands suffering neglect and worse, and no Society is more worthy of our support than the one that goes into the hidden places to bring relief to the helpless. Donations should be sent to The Director of the Society, Victory House, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.

BRITISH EMPIRE CANCER CAMPAIGN

Among the organisations appealing for funds this Christmas none is more worthy of the support of the public than is the British Empire Cancer Campaign. Its work is manifold, and includes the financial support of cancer research in the laboratory and at the bed-side, the encouragement of those who devote themselves to the study of this dread disease, and the education of the lay public in the importance of early treatment, and therefore of prompt medical attention to any symptom that points or seems to point to the presence of the most distressing and painful of diseases. As the Duke of York in his Presidential Address last month rightly said, one has only to refer to the names of those who are controlling the finances on the one hand and the direction of scientific research on the other, to feel assured that the funds so generously supplied by the public are being applied in the best possible way. Cancer has not yet yielded up its secret, but so persistent is the attack upon it from the therapeutic, experimental, and statistical angles that there is every reason for hope that the long looked-for discovery may soon be made. Nothing is more likely to expedite this desired end than full and steady financial support to the Campaign, which, in addition to its own immediate activities, subsidises all the bodies, scientific and clinical, engaged in the investigation and treatment of cancer. Donations may be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, British Empire Cancer Campaign, 12 Grosvenor Crescent, London, S.W.1.

IMPERIAL CANCER RESEARCH FUND

Patron—**HIS MAJESTY THE KING.**
President—**HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BEDFORD, K.G.**
Chairman of the Executive Committee—
SIR HUMPHRY ROLLESTON, Bt., G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
Honorary Treasurer—**SIR HOLBURT WARING, Bt., C.B.E., F.R.C.S.**

Founded in 1902 under the direction of the Royal College of Physicians of London and the Royal College of Surgeons of England as a centre for Research and information on cancer, the Imperial Cancer Research Fund is working unceasingly on the systematic investigation of the disease in man and animals. The work of this Fund and of other great centres of research has increased our knowledge of the origin and nature of cancer and has so altered our outlook that the disease is now curable in increasing numbers. But our present accommodation is too limited and we **are now building new modern laboratories** to extend the scope of our investigations. The income from investmentss and the Endowment Fund is insufficient to cover the total annual expenditure, and help is urgently needed to meet the heavy additional cost of expansion.

Legacies, Subscriptions, and Donations are earnestly solicited, and should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, 8-11 Queen Square, London, W.C.1.

Unknown to You?

In the world beyond your own doors, thousands of little ones are suffering wanton cruelty and ignorant neglect at the hands of parents and guardians. Won't you let the N.S.P.C.C. have your help to save them? Last year, this National Society gave life freed from fear to 113,034 children.

N·S·P·C·C

Please send a Christmas gift **to Hon. Treasurer, Sir G. Wyatt Truscott, Bt., NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN, Victory House, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.**

PRESIDENT: H.R.H. THE DUKE OF KENT.

Epics of the Prairies

are to be found in the lives of the clergy in Western Canada.

With meagre reduced salaries, amidst daily anxieties, these men face sacrifice and suffering unflinchingly, for the sake of the extension of the Kingdom of God. Some parishes cover an area of over one thousand square miles.

Such heroes are worthy of all possible assistance from Church people in the homeland.

Will you strengthen their hands by enabling us to send out greatly increased grants-in-aid?

Contributions should be addressed to the Secretary.

THE COLONIAL AND CONTINENTAL CHURCH SOCIETY
9, Serjeants' Inn, Fleet St., London, E.C.4

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH.	**After October.**	Wed. & Sat.
COLISEUM.	**The Desert Song.**	W., Th., Sat.
COMEDY.	**To and Fro.**	Tues. & Fri.
DRURY LANE.	**Careless Rapture.**	Wed., Sat.
DUCHESS.	**Murder in the Cathedral.**	W., Th., S.
DUKE of YORK'S.	**All Wave ! Revue.**	Tu., Th.
GARRICK.	**Storm in a Teacup.**	Wed., Th., Sat.
GLOBE.	**"Call It a Day."**	Wed. & Sats.
KINGSWAY.	**Buckie's Bears.**	Box. D., 2.30, 5.30
LYRIC.	**Charles the King.**	Thurs., Sats.
MERCURY.	**Panic,** also **Dumb Wife.**	F., S.
PALACE.	**This'll Make You Whistle.**	W., S.
PHŒNIX.	**"Hell-for-Leather !"**	Thur., Sat.
QUEEN'S.	**Jane Eyre.**	Wed., Sat. & Dec. 21.
ROYALTY.	**Marigold.**	Wed., Thurs., Sat.
ST. JAMES'.	**O Mistress Mine.**	Wed., Sat.
ST. MARTIN'S.	**Till the Cows Come Home.**	Tues., Fri.
SAVILLE.	**Over She Goes.**	Sats.
SAVOY.	**"Young Madame Conti."**	Tu., Th.
STRAND.	**Aren't Men Beasts !**	Th., Sat.
WESTMINSTER.	**Waste.**	Wed. & Sat.
WHITEHALL.	**Anthony & Anna.**	W. & S.
WYNDHAM'S.	**"Mademoiselle."**	Wed., Sat.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Evgs., 8.30. W., Sat., 2.30. Tem. 6404.
MARY CLARE in
AFTER OCTOBER.
By RODNEY ACKLAND.

COLISEUM. Tem. 3161. 8.15. W., Th., Sats., 2.30.
THE DESERT SONG,
with EDITH DAY and HARRY WELCHMAN.
Last Night, Dec. 12. Xmas Eve, *CINDERELLA.*

COMEDY. 8.30. Mats., Tues., Fri., 2.30. Whi. 2578.
TO AND FRO. A Revue.
HERMIONE BADDELEY. CYRIL RITCHARD.
VIOLA TREE. ESME PERCY.

DRURY LANE. Tem. 7171. 8.0. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
IVOR NOVELLO, DOROTHY DICKSON,
ZENA DARE in
CARELESS RAPTURE.

DUCHESS. Tem. 8243. 4/10 to 12/6 (unres. 3/-).
Nightly (exc. Mons.), 8.30. Mats., Wed., Th., Sat., 2.30.
MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL.
by T. S. ELIOT. Robert Speaight as "BECKET."
"A play of extraordinary beauty and drama."
—*The Bystander.*

DUKE OF YORK'S. (Tem. 5122.) 8.30. T., Th., 2.30
ARCHIE de BEAR'S RADIO REVUE,
"ALL WAVE !"
with STANLEY HOLLOWAY.

GARRICK. (Tem. 4601.) 8.30. W., Th., Sat., 2.30.
STORM IN A TEACUP.
By JAMES BRIDIE & BRUNO FRANK.
OVER 350 PERFORMANCES.

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. EVENINGS, 8.15 Sharp.
Mats., WEDS. and SATS., 2.30.
FAY COMPTON & OWEN NARES in
"CALL IT A DAY."
By Dodie Smith.

HOLBORN EMPIRE. Holborn 9617.
26th year ITALIA CONTI production
WHERE THE RAINBOW ENDS.
Com. WED., DEC. 16, and DAILY, at 2.15.
Pop. Prices. Concessions to Parties. Box office open.

KINGSWAY. Hol. 4032. Opening Boxing Day.
Matinees Twice Daily, 2.30 & 5.30.
EVERYBODY LOVES **BUCKIE'S BEARS.**
10*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* all bookable. BOOKING NOW.

LYRIC, Shaftesbury Avenue. (Ger. 3686.)
EVGS., 8.30. Mats., THURS. & SATS., 2.30.
BARRY JONES. GWEN FFRANGCON-DAVIES
in **CHARLES THE KING.**
JOYCE KENNEDY. GEORGE MERRITT.

MERCURY. Ladbroke Road, Notting Hill Gate.
2*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, 6*s.*, 7*s.* 6*d.* 8.30 (ex. Mon.). Fri., Sat., 2.30.
PANIC
by Archibald Macleish. Also "The Dumb Wife."
MARGARETTA SCOTT, FRANKLIN DYALL. (Park 5700.)

PALACE. Ger. 6834. 8.15. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
JACK BUCHANAN in
THIS'LL MAKE YOU WHISTLE,
with ELSIE RANDOLPH.

PHŒNIX. Tem. Bar. 8611.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.
"HELL-FOR-LEATHER !"
By Barré Lyndon.

PLAYHOUSE. OVER 250 PERFS. Whi. 7774.
Evgs., 8.30 (Ex. Mons. & Dec. 24).
Mats., Wed., Thurs., Sat. & Dec. 29, 2.30.
NANCY PRICE in
WHITEOAKS.

QUEEN'S THEATRE. Gerrard 4517.
EVGS., 8.30. Mats., WED., SAT. & Dec. 21, 2.30.
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ROYALTY. (Ger. 7331.) Evgs. (exc. Mon.), 8.30.
Wed., Th., Sat., 2.30. Boxing Day, etc., 2.30 & 8.30.
JEAN CLYDE in
MARIGOLD. All Seats Bookable.

ST. JAMES'. (Whi. 3903.) 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
YVONNE PRINTEMPS in
O MISTRESS MINE by Ben Travers
with PIERRE FRESNAY.

ST. MARTIN'S. TEM. BAR 1443.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
TILL THE COWS COME HOME.

SAVILLE. Tem. 4011. 8.15. Mat., Sats., 2.30.
STANLEY LUPINO in
OVER SHE GOES.
Musical Tantivy with LADDIE CLIFF.

SAVOY. Tem. 8888. Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Tu., Th., 2.30
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Tovarich. By Jacques Deval

LIVERPOOL **Playhouse.**
Evgs., 7.45. Mat., Sat., 2.30.
Many Waters. By Monckton Hoffe.

MANCHESTER **Repertory.**
Evgs., 7.30.
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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

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PUBLIC LECTURES AT 5.15 p.m.

December 9th.—The Fawcett Lecture on "DOROTHY WORDSWORTH." By PROFESSOR ERNEST DE SELINCOURT, M.A., D.Litt., F.B.A., LL.D.

Admission free by ticket on application to the SECRETARY, stating date and sending stamped addressed envelope.

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, Holborn.—Sunday, December 6th, at 11 a.m.: HAR DAYAL, M.A., Ph.D.: "THE CASE FOR AND AGAINST PACIFISM." 6.30 p.m. Concert Chamber Music. Admission Free. Visitors welcome.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, December 6th, at 11, H. J. BLACKHAM: "RECORD AND PROSPECTS OF THE NAZI REGIME." 6.30, MORA ASHLEY: "CZECHOSLOVAKIA: HER DEMOCRACY AND PROBLEMS."

THE SEX EDUCATION SOCIETY has arranged for MRS. CHARLOTTE HALDANE to lecture on "ANTI-FEMINISM AND TOTEMISM" at The Suffolk Galleries, Suffolk Street, Haymarket, W.1, on TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8th, at 8 p.m. Chairman: Dr. Norman Haire.

Members free. Non-members, 2s.

J. P. GILMOUR will speak on
"FIFTY YEARS AND A BITTOCK IN THE FREETHOUGHT MOVEMENT"
at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn,
on Tuesday, December 8th, at 7 p.m. Admission Free.

THE Marxist Group (Trotskyists). Inaugural meeting. Independent British organisation. Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, Wednesday, Dec. 16th, 7.30 p.m.

AEOLIAN HALL, NEW BOND STREET, W. Sunday, Dec. 6th, at 11. Theistic Church. REV. J. TYSSUL DAVIS, B.A. Subject: "THE FOOL HATH SAID" (Beverley Nichols).

MODERN CULTURE INSTITUTE. DR. HAR DAYAL will speak on Friday, Dec. 11th, at 8 p.m. at the Caxton Hall on "DEVELOP YOUR PERSONALITY—HOW?"

GUILDHOUSE, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, December 6th. At 4, Tea-Table Conference: MR. HARRY SMOLKA: "AN AUSTRIAN IN THE SOVIET ARCTIC." At 6.30, DR. MAUDE ROYDEN: "SOMETHING ATTEMPTED."

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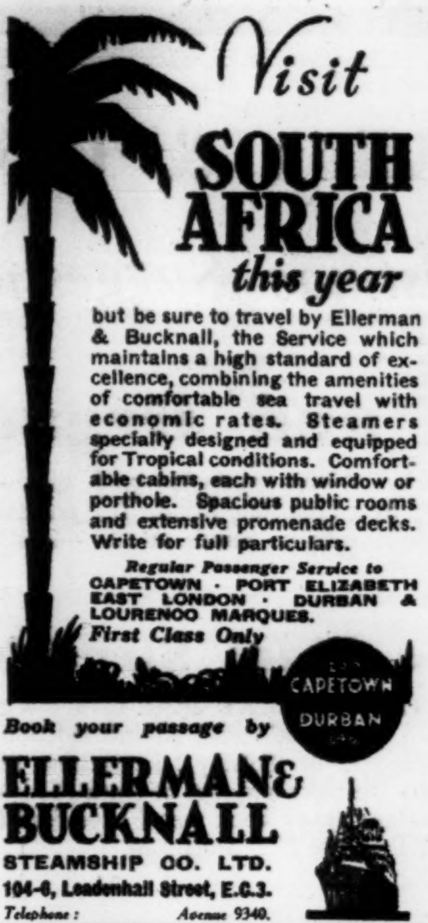

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